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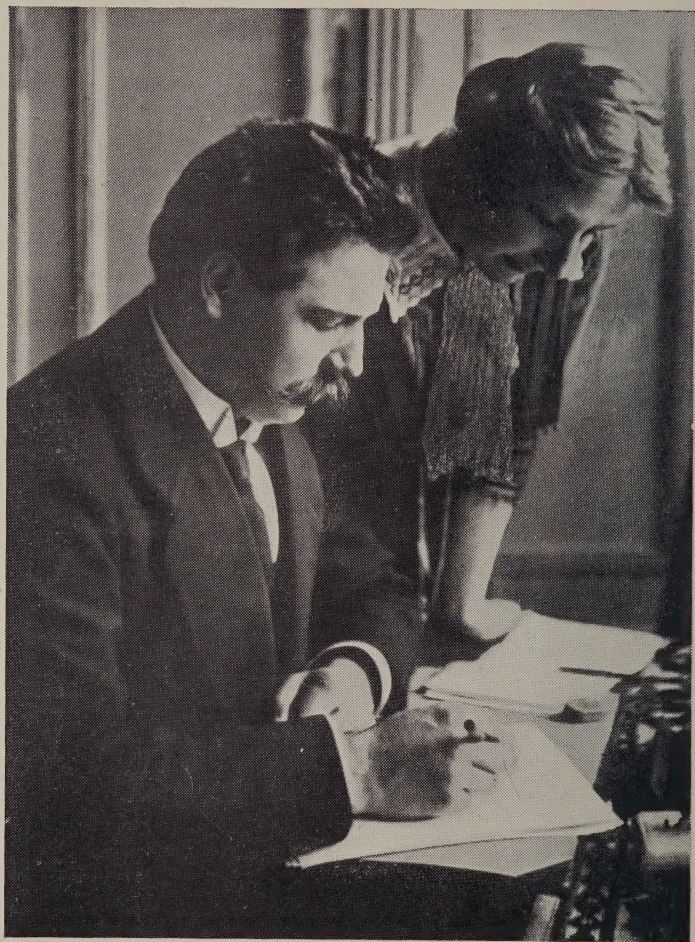
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Albert Schweitzer

ALBERT SCHWEITZER
LIFE AND MESSAGE

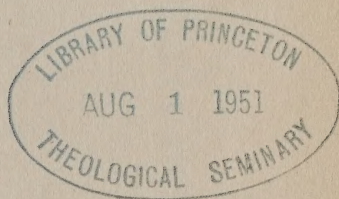


DOCTOR AND MADAME SCHWEITZER

ALBERT SCHWEITZER

LIFE AND MESSAGE

BY
MAGNUS C. RATTER



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CONTENTS

	PAGE
MORAL ADVENTURE	7
Brief Biography	7
Family Influences	7
At School	10
College and Teachers	15
The University	20
His Vocation	23
The Threefold Sacrifice	28
From Inkwell to Test Tube	34
Business Capacity	38
A New Commandment	42
From Fowlhouse to Hospital	45
Catastrophe	54
Return to Africa	59
Magic, Black and White	65
Fellowship in Suffering	67
His Seventieth Birthday	70
Europe and the Negro	77
Youth's Hero	79
 MUSIC AND THE ORGAN	 83
Bach as a Terminal Figure	83
The Organist	86
The Organ Builder	88
Writer on Music	89
Musical Historian	93
Theory of the Aesthetic	95
Bach as Tone Painter	100
Concert Guide	102

	PAGE
THE DYNAMIC JESUS	106
Light Along the Ages	106
The World's Long Hope	108
The Public Ministry	112
The Triumph over Disappointment	120
From Gennesaret to Gettysburg	124
Paul the Apostle	126
The Will to Serve	128
Greek or Hebrew	131
The Triumph over Death	134
Through Redemption to Service	137
Help to Preachers	141
Criticisms and Questions	143
The Rebirth of Christianity	147
REVERENCE FOR LIFE	152
Adventures in Thought	152
Pilgrim of Eternity	157
Indian and Chinese Religion	159
Love Demands the Loving Deed	163
From Athens to Königsberg	165
The Divine Reticence	168
The Ethic of Reverence for Life	171
Think before you Act	176
Limitless Responsibility	179
Criticisms and Questions	184
For Children Only	190
A Leader of Leaders	191
The Mustard Seed	194
Sainted Pioneer of Salvation	196
ONE OF THE ILLUMINATI	198
Amateur or Genius	198
A Rembrandt of the Pen	201
The Mantle of Goethe	205
The Acorn of his Oak	213

MORAL ADVENTURE

Brief Biography

ALBERT SCHWEITZER is one of the great men of the modern world, famous on four counts.

He is a leading organist: his Bach recitals are famous in eight capital cities. He is a consultant on organ construction and the author of a scholarly exposition of Bach.

His writings on Jesus and Paul have given him rank as a leading theologian: these show a new depth of meaning of the New Testament story.

Two volumes on civilization in which he expounds his ethical teaching have placed him among the foremost of social thinkers.

When thirty-eight years of age, already famous, he completed a medical degree that he might serve as a doctor in Equatorial Africa. Conscience and pity gave him his motives: that he must help repay the white man's debt to the Negro; that he must render service as a thank-offering for the privileges and happiness he enjoyed.

"A saint is a man that makes goodness attractive." More significant than his other attainments, this definition gives chief reason why he is famous.

Family Influences

Schweitzer is as much the inheritor of family genius as Bach. In him as a creative musician and musical theologian, the practice, the longings, and the skill of a

family suddenly realized glorious, perfect "expression. Where the father attempted the son achieved.

Born in the parsonage, Schweitzer was brought up in a theological atmosphere. As often as not this alienates : the children see too much ; they learn that bread and butter hangs on not offending ; they know that church government can be as cold as ice. On the other hand, it is especially pleasing when a son of the manse enters the ministry, his young, untried soul aflame to preach the gospel, fired to ceaseless striving by the memory of a saintly father. There is no work nobler than that of a true pastor.

Though beauties in the Schweitzer literature are thick and varied as summer flowers, there is a snowdrop loveliness in the few references to his father. They are the perfect expression of filial love. Over three thousand pages where the illustration is severely thought provoking, seldom lightly emotional, in such writing the tributes to his father are noticeably affectionate. The heart beats through the rhythm of his sentences : his restraint is fear that he may write too much.

" My father's sermons used to make a great impression upon me, because I could see how much of what my father said in the pulpit was of a piece with his own life and experience, and I came to see what an effort, I might say, what a struggle, it meant for him to open his heart to the people every Sunday." * If only Rembrandt could have painted the vigorous old man reading his son's book, pausing at that tribute to wish the mother had been there to read it also.

In a passing sentence Schweitzer tells that, when a young minister, he often wrote his sermons three or four times. This thoroughness, carried into all he does, came in part from his maternal grandfather, who was also a pastor. From this ancestor came also music,

* *Childhood and Youth*, p. 62.

interest in organ-building and ability to improvise. The grandfather on one occasion spent several days following the building of an organ.

His father also loved music. One of the homely scenes which Schweitzer depicts for us is that of his father sitting in the darkening room at the old square piano, giving rein to his imagination. To the father belongs credit for the wider sympathy which later exiled the musician and theologian. The father, keenly interested in mission work, read reports to a Sunday afternoon class. Twenty years afterwards the son who had listened so intently himself responded.

One pen portrait in the Autobiography noble as any Van Dyck painting—Schweitzer thinks in pictures, though his mode of expression is writing—gives insight into the family sources of his moral being. Not his father only, his uncle also, was the nice man whose good deeds are discovered by accident. During the siege of Strassburg, when there was a shortage of milk, the uncle had taken, unknown to nearly all, his milk allowance to an old woman. As his mother told the story, the son thought—how could he become a man such as his mother loved?

Thus was man ennobled outwardly before his sight,
And thus his heart was early introduced
To an unconscious love and reverence
Of human nature.*

The many stories of his uncle's kindness kindled the boyish imagination; his mother's influence led him to consecrate his life, his aim, to be as noble as his uncle. Seldom does the mother enter the Schweitzer writings, but the passing glimpse reveals her as a woman of deep sympathy and of spiritual nature. When he held stubbornly that he would not wear any clothes that dressed him better than other boys, when his father was

* *Prelude*, Book 8.

angry, he felt that at least his mother understood that there was meaning in his obstinacy.

Were it in our power to choose an ancestry for one destined to be a prophet, a preacher to the nations, we could not have discovered another family where all the influences would have been so favourable.

At School

The school register facts of his childhood can be given on a telegraph form. He was born on January 14th, 1875, at Kaisersberg; shortly afterwards his father moved to the pastorate at Gunsbach, where for a time the child attended the village school; later he went to the Munster Realschule, then to the Mulhausen Gymnasium, and so forward to the age of eighteen and college at Strassburg.

As a child he was weakly, but the air of the Vosges mountains at Gunsbach gave him such health and vigour that he grew to Herculean strength. Though the parsonage was poor it was better off than the usual village home and he had the advantage of a cultured environment.

One of five children, he was never spoiled, for the busy pastor left the children to settle their own differences. If one can believe as literal truth, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest out of the womb I sanctified thee: I have appointed thee a prophet unto the nations," * it is true also of Albert Schweitzer. He was born where nature was just right: neither dark Swiss valleys nor high Norwegian mountains yet having a variety of hills, woods, farmsteads: not a harsh landscape nor a lush scenery yet needing such cultivation as keeps the peasant at constant work; near to a cultured centre but set amongst simple people. If we were allowed to set

* Jeremiah 1. 5.

and train our spiritual leaders we could not improve upon the environment of his boyhood.

After a time at the village school, at the age of nine he was sent to the Realschule at Munster. During these early school years he chiefly learned the Hebrew speech of nature—every hill, farmstead and wood a spoken word, the slow movement of the seasons a sacred monologue. Lonely, dreamy, thoughtful, no one would have guessed his true destiny as he was slowly prepared for his life work.

He held unconscious intercourse with beauty
Old as creation, drinking in a pure
Organic pleasure from the silver wreaths
Of curling mist, or from the level plain
Of waters coloured by impending clouds.*

Stubborn at times, dreamy, a trifle awkward, always he was passionate, eager on schoolboy escapades. Quiet before elders, his chief characteristic was his moral sensibility. Treachery and lies he hated. Jew baiting he deplored. At one time he broke from the boys who were taunting a Jewish pedlar. It was not fair.

Aware of strange thoughts which troubled him, and troubled him only, he was the odd child out, if not in games, certainly in spirit. He could hardly then be aware that the twinges of conscience that bothered him were the stirrings of a new ethical awareness in the race. To the schoolfellows he was queer, could not be relied on to tell the usual lies, did not share all the after-school adventures. He would sometimes fight (they respected his fists) or would join the fishing or catapult expeditions.

His home life was happy, altogether delightful. To his parents he was a good son, intractable when he got an idea into his head, but usually obedient, always respectful. To his early teachers he was giggling Albert,

* *Prelude*, Book 1.

that annoyance that sets the whole class laughing, not too bright, except at music. His early schooling neither helped nor retarded his genius.

To get at the intimate thought of a precocious child is impossible, because the adult sees even his own childhood through later experience; where, as with *Memoirs of Childhood and Youth*, we have his own story of childhood told with charm and restraint, a picture of happy, serious, quizzical boyhood, attractive as Christopher Robin, even so, we have only a man remembering, not a young child feeling. What did a child feel when he braved the scorn of sturdy companions by protesting that it was not right to hurt a worm? What did the villagers say, when Hans told his mother, who then told the Sexton, that Albert had said fishing was wrong because the hook tore the mouth of the fish? Illustrations abound which prove he was no ordinary boy; this we can tell even without his admission "youth's unqualified *joie de vivre* I never really knew, and I believe that to be the case with many children, even though they appear outwardly merry and quite free from care." *

Seldom is a boy as sensitive as Schweitzer was. They may not be the boisterous mad-caps they appear, but hardly one boy in a whole county is as sharply aware of pain in the animal world, with courage to stand up for his strange opinions. Many boys in boarding school may be a little out of the field games because they prefer the library or the classroom, but few have courage to break up an afternoon's sport because a church bell suddenly becomes an imperious summons.

He was invited by a chum to go shooting birds. He agreed, but with conscience twinges. Just as the other boy was about to shoot, the church lenten bell sounded. This became the Voice of God. He threw away his catapult, made such a noise that the birds flew to safety, and tells that ever since the bells have reminded

* C. & T., p. 39.

him of the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." Little wonder that this sensitive boy, when an older teacher, would be angry with the philosophers who limit human compassion to men, excluding the animals from our first, our deepest sympathy.

If the story, told when he was aged seven, is strange, this, when he was hardly five, is uncanny. It was strange to him that he should pray only for father, mother, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, friends: why not pray for animals? So when his mother had kissed him, prayed with him, he added this silent prayer, "O Heavenly Father, protect and bless all things that have breath; guard them from all evil, and let them sleep in peace." *

His memories of conscience go back to his petticoat days; in the relating of this the twinkle, always round the corner in his eye, peeps out roguishly. A bee had stung his hand and he found that his misfortune made him the most interesting member of the company. He liked the petting and the kisses, so continued crying long after the pain had disappeared. His conscience told him to stop, but "in order to be interesting a bit longer he went on with his lamentations, so getting a lot more comforting than he really needed." † But conscience spoiled the rest of the day.

When the deed was done
I heard among the solitary hills
Low breathings coming after me, and sounds
Of undistinguishable motion, steps
Almost as silent as the turf they trod.‡

If the ethical teacher, whose purpose it is to give an uneasy conscience where before we enjoyed content, is foreshadowed in these stories, if the thinker who was to extend the range of our ethical responsibility is foreshadowed in the child prayer for animals, so also the genius in music is foreshadowed. When, not yet three

* *C. & T.*, p. 40. † *ibid.*, p. 10. ‡ *Prelude*, Book 1.

years old, he first heard a vocal duet, the two-part harmony so thrilled, he had to hold on to a wall to prevent himself falling. When he first heard brass instruments he almost fainted from excess of pleasure. When only seven he played harmonies to his village teacher, who could only pick out the tune with two wooden fingers ; pride in his achievement was lost when conscience reproved him for having, because of his enthusiasm, shamed her inability. By the age of eight he was playing the organ though his legs could not reach the pedals.

Child genius in music is not unknown, but is rarely united with an intellect that leads to heresy. When very young he asked his father why was it that the parents of Jesus remained poor if the wise men brought rich gifts? Why did the wise men never trouble any more about Jesus? Is it surprising if, when young, he could ask questions which dumbfounded his father, that as a young lecturer he should ask questions which dumbfounded the theological professors of Europe?

If the others foreshadow the genius, this next story promises the moral hero. Schweitzer may be great as musician or writer, but that would evoke little enthusiasm; it is *The Threefold Sacrifice* which sets him near to Francis of Assisi. He had been fighting one of the village boys, had got him down, and was pummelling hard, when the other boy cried out, "Yes, if I got broth to eat twice a week, as you do, I should be as strong as you are." * This cruel plainness of George Nitschelm brought home to him that privilege is a horrid fact. The boys did not accept him as one of themselves, he was the parson's son, one of the privileged. He then determined that he would not, in clothes at least, appear better than the common village lads, and he stuck to his determination. He would not wear a new coat which was made for him because it was too good ;

* *C. & T.*, p. 17.

no wonder the father boxed his ears. He would not wear a new hat as became a son of the parsonage. He insisted on fingerless gloves.

With quizzical realism, as an older man, he comments on his boyish stubbornness, so well intended: "the village boys never knew what I went through on their account; they accepted without emotion all my efforts not to be in any way different from them, and then, whenever the slightest dispute arose between us, they stabbed me with the dreadful word 'sprig of the gentry.'" * Yet he insists, in his ethic, that if the call comes to sacrifice, it be made, even though it does not appear to benefit those for whom it is made.

College and Teachers

Thanks to the kindness of his uncle, a strict but well-intentioned guardian, young Schweitzer was able to stay at Mulhausen, and thus enjoyed the benefit of a Gymnasium education. He was so dreamy there was danger he would be taken away as not worth the expensive education given at great sacrifice. The danger soon passed due to this stimulus. Schweitzer is a hero worshipper, but with fine intuition he was fired not by the exploits of Luther, Frederick the Great or Bismarck. No, the sense of duty in Dr. Wehmann, his form master, shown in even the smallest matters, evoked in him the desire to emulate, and in a short time the dreamy scholar became a zealous student.

If teachers have a sermon during their Annual Conference they should honour and take encouragement from Dr. Wehmann. So lasting was the impression that even after his return from Africa Schweitzer remembered him, sought to visit him, but tragedy had ended the teacher's life. Teaching yields deep and lasting joys, terrible heartbreaks. If any have not been promoted as they merit, they should read of Principal

* *C. & T.*, p. 20.

Deecke, who, bearing patiently the oppressor's wrong, was another lasting influence in his life. If Schweitzer is in the succession of Marcus Aurelius, a Stoic of the Stoics though on a higher level of affirmative thought, much credit must go to the Principal whose influence so moulded the plastic mind of young genius. He was fortunate in his tutors during adolescence when hero worship can be so helpful.

His description of the Mulhausen home during school terms is sharp, penetrating and colourful as a Jan Steen picture. We see the Aunt, though deeply appreciative of literary style, shut her book almost in the middle of a sentence because it was the hour for supper, a habit which provokes a whimsical smile as he pens his reminiscences: the Uncle is a disciplinarian. Not long after he was with them he proved to their full satisfaction that he understood politics and could converse sensibly thereon—reading the newspaper leaders, age eleven!

No wonder that when he was fourteen, he was too eager to argue with every one; his father imposed a restraint upon him before taking him out; the puppy had to be muzzled. This was only an imperative need for self-expression, "a passionate need of thinking." As his friends know he is always eager to join in sharp discussion whether with an unknown student or with Baron von Hugel, so long as willingness exists to take blow for blow in animated argument.

His training in music was at first dull, for that reserve of character which shows itself in many ways restrained his playing before his music master. Only when challenged did he abandon himself to expressive playing, and shortly afterwards, when his worth was proven, he realized his secret ambition, to be allowed to play on the St. Stephen's organ. The story of his early musical triumphs is engagingly told in his book on his childhood.

At school he liked history, writing and science. Homer left him cold. Language and mathematics cost him an effort but, early evidence of that driving will which glories in overcoming difficulty, to these he gave himself with such mastery that soon he was tutoring in mathematics in order to buy a much-coveted bicycle. This power of the will to subdue all bodily desires and mental habits, this co-ordinating of the whole man when the hurdle is seen, is one of the major facts of his compelling character.

This power of the will explains why in writing of Paul, the soldier of Jesus Christ, he writes in an ecstasy of hero worship; for a few pages the battered old warrior, who knew only Christ and the power of his gospel, comes again to vigorous life, his indomitable will lashing his body to what appeared impossible effort. This power of the will explains why in Schweitzer's philosophy the central thought is, "I am will-to-live in the midst of will-to-live." The phrase did not come from Schopenhauer; it came from the growing boy who determined that he would be specially good at languages and mathematics just because they cost an effort.

Though *Memoirs of Childhood and Youth* is an assured classic there is a strange lack of tuckshop revelries in the fascinating story. It is a memory of duties performed, a tribute to parents and teachers, a story of deepening awareness, but there is no whisper of a picnic on the river. He must have sometimes revelled in the cream cakes, surely he delighted in Weihnachts Kuchen. This joy of which Mrs. Beeton is high priestess, this delight in things eatable that even the consecrated Wordsworth could not omit from his "Prelude," never runs into the front room of memory even once while the Doctor of Lambaréné is writing. We can believe he never stole apples, never broke windows, but it is testimony to the supremacy of will that his

Autobiography is almost solely concerned with moral and spiritual development.

Yet he is no kill-joy; he has a rich sense of fun. Many stories are at hand but "the trousers" must serve as illustration. "My leaving examination at the Gymnasium I passed satisfactorily, though not so well as people expected, and the cause of that was the trousers I wore on the occasion! I possessed a black frock-coat, which I had inherited from an old relative of my mother's, but I had no black trousers. For economy's sake I would not have a pair made, but asked my uncle to let me wear his for the examination. He was much shorter than I was, and fairly stout, while I was tall and thin; however, we thought it would be all right for this one occasion. Unfortunately I omitted to try beforehand how they fitted, and when on the morning of the examination I put them on, they scarcely came down to my shoes, although I had lengthened my braces with string, moreover, between them and the waistcoat there was a yawning gap. How they fitted me behind I refrain from describing!

"My appearance among my fellow-examinands produced unrestrained merriment. They turned me round and round so that they might look at every side of me, and our solemn entry into the examination room was anything but *comme il faut*, because we could not control our laughter. When our masters at the table saw the trousers, they too were amused, though the stern School Commissioner from Strassburg—his name was Albrecht—who was to preside, failed to see what it was all about. All he could see was that I was the cause of the ill-timed merriment, and he made some severe remarks on our irreverent behaviour in general and on myself in particular. In order to take down the conceit of the supposed buffoon, he undertook to examine me himself in all the subjects except in mathematics, of which he confessedly knew nothing. He gave me a

hard time. Some friendly looks from the Principal encouraged me, and I did my best, but many of the questions from my stern *vis-à-vis* got no answer, and again and again he shook his solemn head. He was especially annoyed that I was unable to give him any accurate information about the way they beached the ships, as described by Homer, and as the other candidates knew very little more about it than I did, he denounced our ignorance as a serious defect in our culture. For my part I thought it a far greater defect in our culture that we were leaving the Gymnasium without knowing anything about astronomy or geology.

"The last subject of all was history, the Commissioner's own special subject. In ten minutes he seemed a different person! His indignation melted away, and finally, instead of questioning me, he discussed with me the differences between the colonizing efforts of the Greeks and those of the Romans." *

As during his early school years, so throughout his adolescence, more significant than any tutoring was the influence of nature. From Gunsbach to Mulhausen, a walk which he had often to take, the way leads through wood and field with pleasant hills as background. This was as potent an influence as the classroom work. The silences and the solitudes of nature were his moral guardians, from them he learned more than from the discipline of the school.

Ye mountains and ye lakes
And sounding cataracts, ye mists and winds
That dwell among the hills where I was born.
If in my youth I have been pure of heart,
If, mingling with the world, I am content
With my own modest pleasure, and have lived
With God and Nature communing, removed
From little enmities and low desires—
The gift is yours. †

* C. & T., p. 84.

† *Prelude*, Book 2.

The University

Development in the life of Schweitzer reveals that the primary, the saint and the artist, is seen long before the secondary, the thinker and the historian, is discernible. It is good that it is so; feeling is greater than thinking. Not because a man knows that suffering may be lessened will he sacrifice that he may render his small service to that end; only when he feels the anguish of the less fortunate as a personal agony will he be urged to strange course. He may then do what is folly to this world.

With a due sense that the intellectual is subservient to the spiritual, as Paul the theologian is less significant than Paul the impassioned missionary, we pursue our study of his life. At the age of eighteen he entered Strassburg University, and the determination to master what was most difficult to him, first waked by Dr. Wehmann, soon made him master of Hebrew. While engaged on his military year he mastered Greek, and, almost solely through a reading of the New Testament, came to his original understanding of Jesus, a theory which was so profoundly to disturb Christian laziness.

His college life passed quietly. As ancestry, home and school were all helpful to the deepening of spiritual awareness, so the University was just what his type of mind demanded that he might realize to the full the promise of his original powers. Strassburg University was then modern, allowing to the students wide liberty in their studies, a course of training at that time only followed in a few universities. His course completed with distinction, he was awarded a travelling scholarship which enabled him to study in Paris and Berlin.

In Paris the famous organist and writer on music, C. M. Widor, accepted him as a pupil for the organ because Schweitzer's exposition of the Bach Preludes showed the older musician that the musical genius of the

younger man was already evident—and the world is always ready to facilitate the development of genius, though sometimes it allows its gifted children to starve. Happily, Schweitzer did not starve in Paris but he was often hungry; he had only his scholarship to live on and records gratefully that Widor would often give him a substantial meal. It is to the credit of Widor that he realized poor students could be hungry; well-salaried professors may be indifferent to the welfare of their scholarship students.

In full command of exceptional powers, physical, intellectual and spiritual, when just over twenty years of age, he commenced his world pilgrimage, a search for a true understanding of human life, its purpose and destiny. The thinker wanted to know even though the indwelling mystic was intuitively persuaded of the dignity, the grandeur of human character; but the thinker must struggle to decipher the strange hieroglyphics—love, friendship, sin, suffering and death. This intellectual phase lasted eight years, then, learning from the second part of Faust, he became a man of action, and after another twenty years there was given to him the enlightenment he sought. Suddenly the hieroglyphics became an ethical imperative, his life search was over, he had his gospel, "reverence for life."

As the first effort towards a life-understanding, his earliest serious endeavour to find answers to whence? why? whither? he set himself, with his usual thoroughness, to a mastery of the entire writings of Immanuel Kant. The utilitarian end was to obtain a doctor's degree, but he was far too deadly serious to pursue philosophy that he might from mastery of its arcana secure a livelihood. His critical treatise, a volume of power for a young man, reveals how exhaustive was his research in the original works, how masterful was his grasp of the essentials. Had he given himself to tech-

nical philosophy and its chess manœuvrings he would have ranked in the tournaments.

To the young man, a pilgrim of eternity, though he would not himself use the Dantesque title, there was no final help in the profound, sometimes obscure, but always serious writings of Kant. Schweitzer admired the ordered life of the Königsberg philosopher, felt kinship with his passion for work, but was not persuaded that he had written a consistent philosophy. The speculative thought did not meet his need. In 1899 his thesis on Kant was published. He was awarded his doctorate in philosophy.

While working upon Kant during his year in Paris, Schweitzer was busy perfecting his organ-playing. Under three masters, two of them advocating different finger practice, he was sufficiently apt as pupil to play as the master required. In music, as in other arts, though sheer doggedness will never give easy natural mastery of the medium, no one attains highest eminence without laborious practice, faithfully carried through over many years. That he could carry through to full mastery the separate studies, philosophy and music, even though gifted for both, was only possible because he could often study all night, go to music practice in the morning, carry through all the second day fresh and able to concentrate, thanks to a physique broad and powerful. Perhaps this explains why the Schweitzer teaching is so robust.

After Paris he studied for a year in Berlin, and would have come to England for a third postgraduate year but that consideration for another student moved him to yield his scholarship. This student never availed himself of the scholarship thus made vacant. At the age of twenty-four he had completed his training. He was a doctor of philosophy, author of a volume on Kant, and an organist whose rendering of Bach was soon to give him command of many concert halls in Europe.

Staunch to his convictions he chose the ministry rather than a life's work in philosophy or music. This was his destiny. Tradition, family influence, a personal call, all led toward the ministry. The preacher's vocation is his affection ; he is philosopher only in so far as it helps men to better life.

His Vocation

As the pastor of St. Nicholas, Strassburg, he was loved by the congregation. They were drawn to the young man, cleverer than the organist himself on the organ, so like to one of themselves though rumour prophesied a brilliant future. His sermons never obtruded his cleverness, the carpenter and the shopmen could understand him. His only fault was his brevity ; a quarter of an hour was not enough : like the peaches from the market place it was short measure. In the homes he was a welcome guest ; young people felt that he understood them, and the deaf grandfather was pleased that the young parson was so willing to shout into his ear. Once Schweitzer's father said to an old man how good it was that he came to church, though he could not hear a single word ; the old man answered, " The communion of saints, Herr Pastor, the communion of saints." * The cinema will never create this value.

When instructing a confirmation class he tried to awaken in them a love for the church, a feeling of need for the solemn hour of the Sunday service. Aware that institutional religion has a beauty to give to the adult, his deepest appreciation of worship is that it can be so meaningful to the child. " The highest whom I knew on earth I here saw bowed down, with awe unspeakable, before a Higher in Heaven ; such things, especially in infancy, reach inwards to the very core of your being, mysteriously does a Holy of Holies build itself into visibility in the mysterious deeps ; and Reverence, the

* C. & T., p. 68.

divinest in man, springs forth undying from its mean envelopment of fear." *

He is himself the best exponent of his ideals as a pastor. "For ten years, before I left for Africa, I prepared boys in the parish of St. Nicholas, in Strassburg, for confirmation. After the war some of them came to me and thanked me for having taught them so definitely that religion was not a formula for explaining everything. They said it had been that teaching that had kept them from discarding Christianity, whereas so many others in the trenches discarded it, not being prepared to meet the inexplicable. When you preach, you must lead men out of the desire to know everything to the knowledge of the one thing that is needful, to the desire to be in God, and thus no more to conform to the world but to rise above all mysteries as those who are redeemed from the world. 'If only I have thee, I care nothing for heaven and earth.' . . . 'All things work together for good to them that love God.' Point men to these words as to the peaks of Ararat, where they may take refuge when the floods of the inexplicable overwhelm all round." †

Thirty years after that time this writer visited a few of his congregation: they spoke of him as men speak of a saint: their tone was of adoration and wonder; in seeking to tell her impression of his pastoral visits, a woman created an awesome compliment, he would blue-pencil. It was remembered of him that he gave chocolate to the children.

At this point one would have seen in the pulpit a tall young man with black hair, a Hercules of a man. As a preacher he had the double talent, able to satisfy the intellectual and hold the attention of simple people. He would use ordinary words to say extraordinary things. He was the master of a simple style; possibly

* *Sartor Resartus*, Book 2, ch. 2.

† *Christianity and the Religions of the World*, p. 82.

because he was so hard a worker. He would, if necessary, write out a sermon two or three times. Testimony to the indelible impression his sermons made is that the people, years after, talk among themselves of sermons they heard.

He has strong views on the building of a church as a place of beauty with a suggestion of far distance. Do not build a wall around a rostrum; a preacher's church is a sad affair. That the confirmation class should be one of his chief affections is natural when we remember that one of his earliest memories is of his father's church: ". . . my gaze wandered from the Finite to the Infinite, and my soul was wrapped in peace and quiet." *

Though with his congregation in their fun-making, his music and his theology were more to him, but if sorrow, poverty or suffering came to any member, his scholarly work at once gave place to ministration. Much of his time was given to work among poor boys, to work with discharged prisoners; many of the down-and-out went to him as to a friend.

Always, while carrying through his ministerial duties, or when giving organ recitals, he was alert to every opportunity to help the less fortunate and the suffering. He was not content to subscribe, he must himself render the service, regardless of the cost in time or energy, willing even that his scholarship suffer if only the service be rendered. This anxiety, this urge to render direct service, accepting no proxy, led him to Africa, to which consummation his life was moving.

When only twenty-seven he secured a teaching post in the university, and a year later was appointed principal of a theological college. It is told of him that, while a professor, he would sometimes be found, not at a high table, but with lesser lights, joking and laughing. His early intimates mention this. He was a teacher who

* *C. & R.*, p. 65.

interested his pupils: they liked him tremendously, for he allowed them as much freedom as possible. But he demanded hard work.

Tributes to his helpfulness to the lame duck are many: he would sacrifice many evenings to coach them for examination. Has he not said, "There are two types: such as know, and others that know how to examine"? If students came to him they never felt they were intruding upon his time: some professors never speak to students: they interview them. All the while he was ever seeking to get in touch with, and to help the derelicts of society. Better be diddled on occasion than that need go untended.

This post he held for only a few years, due to the great change in his life which The Threefold Sacrifice demanded. To appreciate this sacrifice it is necessary to review his attainments and prospects three years after his appointment to the university staff.

In terms of personal success he had, for his age, climbed high. To be principal of a college and a university lecturer was a distinction. His work on the messiahship of Jesus had aroused considerable interest, indicating that more would be heard of a writer so original. In manuscript lay *The Quest*, with which his name is now linked in theological circles. He knew within himself its stirring significance. Also, the notes for a great work on Paul, with succeeding study of the early Christian Church, were prepared.

This historical research was as magnificent a conception as any Harnack had ever planned. It was the working out, and the presentation of a strange but helpful understanding of Jesus, Paul and the early church—an effort to prove that they shared the mental life of their time yet transcended their age by reason of ethical intensity. They remain supreme as spiritual leaders, not by virtue of peculiar revelation: they are immortal because their devotion to Love knew no restrictive

caution. No original thesis can be compressed into a sentence, suffice it now to say that not only were his thoughts and schemes of lofty conception, he had the ability and determination to carry them through to finest execution.

Moreover, he was an acknowledged musician of European fame. If as a theologian he was but a promise, as a musician he had arrived, holding position as organist to the Bach Society of Paris, a recitalist already in a position to command his audience. He was also an authority on organ construction, and was often called into consultation when the question of the improvement or the replacement of an old organ was raised. Soon he was to publish his work on Bach, an exposition that immediately ranked him as the foremost writer on the subject.

The first edition he wrote in French in 1905 to fill in a gap in French musical history, but this received such instant recognition he was commissioned to prepare a German translation, which became a much expanded new book. A story illustrates his power on the organ and his phenomenal memory. A conceited city organist, after playing through a fugue, as he wiped the sweat from his brow, said, "Now young fellow, you play that." Schweitzer sat down, closed the music, and played it through.

His writings on Kant, Christian origins, and Bach, which have gained him three doctorates, comprise 2000 pages and "are milestones in the study of these subjects." * The point of view taken in each instance was reached at an early age: in the latter two, his striking discoveries have not been modified or changed. Later writing has but confirmed his early judgment. There can be few instances of genius achieving enlightenment at quite so early an age in such diverse spheres of art and thought.

* Anon.

The Threefold Sacrifice

It appeared natural that a career so promising would be consolidated and the life work continued as it had been so brilliantly commenced. But it was not to be. Suddenly, without warning, consulting no one, he announced that he would study medicine, would qualify as a surgeon, to go to Central Africa, there to alleviate the suffering of the helpless natives. The Threefold Sacrifice required by this decision would be made.

How did it come about that a doctor of philosophy, a doctor of theology, the principal of a theological academy, a university lecturer, a doctor of music, an organ recitalist, an authority on organ building, with lightning decisiveness, surrendered all, that he might go out as a medical doctor to fight dysentery, leprosy, and sleeping sickness in the tropics? The term medical missionary is hardly applicable, for even as he has given a new, a truer appreciation of Jesus, so also he was to give a new significance, a deeper meaning to missionary service. At the age of thirty, when personal triumph is sweetest, when the applause of an admiring audience is most gratifying, he would put all this behind him. Triumph was not spurned, it was sacrificed.

This renunciation was the consequence of a self-consecration one brilliant spring morning in Gunsbach (he was then only twenty-one) when he felt it was not right that he should accept all the happiness which he enjoyed as if it were his due; he must render immediate service as a return to Love for all that he enjoyed. Most people would feel that having worked so hard he deserved his success—you have a right to what you work for—but Schweitzer does not feel you have a right to all the apples just because you are tall. You must share with the less fortunate, for in this wide world there are many less happy.

With a sure sense of his capacity he then determined that he would use his gifts in art and writing till he was thirty, then he would give himself in direct service to humanity. It was a unique consecration, peculiar to the man as his interpretation of Bach or his understanding of Jesus are peculiar. A clear awareness of abilities, talents, to be exercised for an allowed term of years, with a determined consecration that then, all would be surrendered, that Love might dictate to him the lowly service required as a thank offering for the happiness he enjoyed. If only an Ibsen could dramatize that moving hour.

But "then" is a common adverb in youth consecration. Like New Year resolutions, vows conditioned by "then" are apt, very apt, to be ignored when time comes for execution. So many reasons can be tendered to excuse meeting the obligation. Fame too intoxicates; few can drink deeply of the cup and, when fortune is offering a stronger draught, refuse.

There is no occasion for surprise in the youthful consecration at Gunsbach; that is the mood of all idealistic youth. What astonishes is the determination of the gifted man, nine years later at Strassburg, to honour his pledge. Excuses would have been easy: he was already serving humanity; as musician, lecturer and preacher, he had ample opportunity, according to the wisdom of this world, to redeem and maintain his youthful consecration.

His own words about Jesus apply to himself. "His life at this time was dominated by a dogmatic idea, which rendered him indifferent to all else, even to the happy and successful work as a teacher which was opening before him." * In Jesus the "dogmatic idea" was predestination, in Schweitzer it was responsibility. Deeply influenced by the way Jesus acted, he was himself led to a similar course.

* *The Quest*, p. 351.

His decision to go to Africa, the particular fulfilment of his vow, was reached swiftly. On his desk in the Principal's room lay a mission magazine; one of the articles appealed for a doctor; he read the article. His waiting time and his search for an especial work were over. He would go to Lambaréné. For seven years, even while executing the full duties of a pastor and a lecturer, he had tried various social services, hoping always to find the duty that would give opportunity fully to redeem his youthful consecration.

The eagle decision started the sparrows chirruping. From his record of the time it is clear that few understood. They all declared he was wasting himself: a prime minister does not go into the front line trenches; could he not content himself with lecturing on behalf of foreign missions? True, his admiration of the work was good, but with his influence and reputation he could do so much at home. The idea of a gifted organist going out to build with his own hands a wooden shack in the primeval forest was too, too foolish. He must be disappointed in love, or chagrined at a too slow rise to fame. He must . . . And so they twittered, good folks all, not able to comprehend a regal soul urged by the spirit that was in Jesus to a strange unusual course.

His thirtieth birthday, which might well have been devoted to a happy estimation of his certain chances, wealth, the Provostship of the University, the glory of recognition, was devoted instead to a clear calculation as to how far he could go with his present savings, how much of his lecture work he could continue while studying medicine, how soon he could finish his present work on the editing of Bach. It was no revivalistic, emotional surrender. Calmly he counted the cost, quietly he went forward.

The cost was greater than even his friends who tried to dissuade realized. But he was prepared for The Threefold Sacrifice. Once committed he never shirked

the price: he reckoned on no discount. "To abandon the organ, to renounce the academic teaching, activities to which I had given my heart, and to lose my financial independence, relying for the rest of my life on the help of friends," * this was The Threefold Sacrifice that duty required of him. Love called for an immediate personal service from him, man to man, privileged and endowed to the less fortunate and primitive, and if he would respond to the uttermost this was the imperious demand.

Madame Schweitzer tells us that his decision to go was immediate and irrevocable, like so many of his major decisions. He was a born general, and though he knew it not, the mantle of William Booth had fallen upon him. His warfare would be against darkness and suffering, his army the spiritually sensitive. In this strife the leader is the gifted man, who asks from others, devotion less than he himself has rendered.

This is the reason why members of "The Fellowship of Suffering," though they have no central office, look upon Schweitzer as the glorious realization of all that they would like to be; the high that proved too high for them is made visible in him; the service that was too hard for them is nobly lived in him; the passion to live the Christlike life that lost itself in middle age is seen in him; where they shared the Gunsbach consecration they came to no Strassburg; the fatal "then" lengthened and in their old age they knew that they had lived good, honourable, even noble lives, but they had shirked their Calvary.

Despite the quiet almost cold analysis of his Strassburg decision, an analysis sombre and beautiful as Rembrandt's Anatomy Lesson (Schweitzer observes the reticence of an objective artist in his self-revealings, in this sharing the diffidence of his father), despite the lack of ecstasy in his telling of the story, sensitive people will

* *My Life and Thought*, p. 230.

always respect this laying of three dearest affections upon the altar that he might relieve suffering from leprosy or sleeping sickness.

When, if it so happens, he is laid underneath the palm trees, in the place of rest behind his hospital, when his organ-playing is silenced, when his work on Bach is ended, when he no longer reads the New Testament, when the site of his hospital is marked on the wall of a factory, even then The Threefold Sacrifice will be honoured. In virtue of the power streaming therefrom his ethic will be a redemptive influence, working through individuals to aid the fashioning of a finer civilization.

Though he would frown upon this hero worship, he himself admires the heroes of self-sacrifice and renunciation. As such he is numbered. In no way forgetting that numberless thousands have surrendered as unreservedly it is so much the more striking when a gifted man surrenders. To God a widow's mite is worthy, a moral inspiration given as a parable. Taking no grain of glory from the sacrifices of the multitudes, it must be admitted there are differences twixt men. A selfish lion is more impressive than an unselfish mouse. It is when a king of men makes sacrifice that the human nature of all men is made more royal.

From our vantage view, forty-four years later, when success has justified the chosen course, it needs imagination to sense how untoward it appeared in 1904, sympathy to sense that the sacrifice demanded was most real. To require a musician to give up all hope of organ-playing for four years, the likely period of absence from civilization, to require that he sacrifice his European fame as Bach recitalist, for lacking finger practice his skill must be lost, was a sacrifice that even Brand himself might have hesitated to make. No wonder it was urged, not love, but duty was the exacting master he served.

To require a lecturer and a pastor who loved his desk

and pulpit as Spurgeon loved his, who felt the expectation of his students and the affection of his people as did that great preacher, to demand that this be renounced, was as cruel a demand as Brand's stern call to Agnes that she must give up the last white treasure of her buried child.

To require of an independent nature that a secure living be given up, content thereafter with the charity offerings of friends, is a sacrifice that only the proud Scot, Thomas Carlyle, could make intimate and real. No wonder his nearest friends and college colleagues whispered that he was losing his reason. All this was a living experience to Schweitzer in 1904. Truth is stranger than fiction; Ibsen never dared imagine that life would outclass Brand, but it came so.

An awareness of supreme command urged him to decision: though he carefully even coldly considered the matter, he obeyed, God. The only occasion when even the trace of irritation appears in his so severely objective Autobiography is when he writes of how his friends received the news. He has not discussed it with them; he simply wrote to inform them of the decision. In defence of the apparent slight he quotes that Paul "had not conferred with flesh and blood what he meant to do for Jesus." *

One strong characteristic is this power of sudden decision. While lesser people are making up their mind, he has the work well in hand. He would have made a good general. Abruptly, when a child, he ended his fishing and hunting: abruptly he gave up the playing of cards: abruptly he gave up smoking: abruptly he decided Africa was his call. His mind clicks like a camera shutter: he sees all at a glance and gives decision. He is that rare combination, an intellectual who is a man of action—prompt, peremptory, resolute.

* *L. & T.*, p. 108.

As well have tried to dam the flowing Rhine at Strassburg as turn him from his determined course; the argument of acquaintances, the expostulations of friends, the pleadings of intimates, all failed. He would study to become a doctor that he might go to Africa, and there, in immediate personal service, man to man, he would render to love the service required of him, give some return for the happiness he enjoyed and to some degree recompense the coloured people for all that they had suffered at the hands of the white race.

As Jesus, by self-chosen suffering and self-determined crucifixion, made atonement for those elected to the kingdom of righteousness, persuaded that through his vicarious suffering and death they would be purified and thus spared the otherwise inevitable tribulation (the divine instrument of purification which would make them worthy), so Schweitzer, in his little way, through suffering, perhaps even death, would give himself to the healing of the Africans, that they might be spared unnecessary pain.

From Inkwell to Test Tube

To determine he would go to Africa was the sober decision of a hallowed hour: to take a medical degree was the sustained effort of five years' hard work. It is not easy at thirty to commence a new life work. The medical course which young men find difficult enough for their fresh years of keenest study Schweitzer mastered when a professional bed usually makes itself felt as a very comfortable place. Not all admirers pause to realize the difficult work a medical course means. Medicals, with memories of heavy textbooks on even one disease, will give full credit to the effort.

During the medical course he continued his theological studies, gave organ recitals, was consulted on old and new organs, and preached in his own church. True, he resigned as principal and lessened his university lectur-

ing, but while he took the medical course with the freshers he kept active his other studies while they, the young men, gave their entire time to medicine.

Thanks to a physique which enabled him to work eighteen hours a day, a physique that could support constant strain over years at a span, Schweitzer succeeded in the medical course. What the surgeon Madelung said as they left the examination rooms tersely expresses the fact: "It is only because you have such excellent health that you have got through a job like that." * A man in his true self is the character he admires. Though not alike in health, in their capacity to sustain continuous study without fatigue Bach and Schweitzer are one: the latter describes the musician as sitting up all night to copy or write scores, not only one night but many.

Older people who have joined a class of young students know that "out of it, old fellow feeling," but almost at once he was one with the medicals in class, though when he crossed the quadrangle he was a professor. In Strassburg he was a mere student of anatomy, when he travelled to Barcelona he was a famous organist. So much was he one with his fellow students that at the end of the course they persuaded him that, contrary to his habit, he must cram, otherwise he could not hope to get through.

Always, in his other studies, he had mastered the subject, never crammed for the examination, but in medicine he joined the black coffee circle to ensure success in the schools. "When on December 17th after my last examination, I strode out of the hospital into the darkness of the winter evening, I could not grasp the fact that the terrible strain of the medical course was now behind me. Again and again I had to assure myself that I was really awake and not dreaming." † He was a doctor of medicine.

* *L. & T.*, p. 131.

† *loc. cit.*

The quality of genius informs every work, large or small, of a master. While doing his year of practical medicine Schweitzer took as the subject for his thesis *The Mental Health of Jesus*. This is a thin volume, but the same method, historical investigation then statement of his own judgment, is followed, as in his *Bach*, *Jesus* and *Ethics*. He seeks to establish that Jesus was normal, that there is no evidence of mental disease, that it is absurd to suggest he suffered from morbid ideas about his own greatness. As incidental value of this forty-six page thesis is its evidence of thoroughness. To refute those who hold Jesus subject to morbid ideas, though they are of little consequence as writers, Schweitzer immersed himself in the boundless problem of paranoia, mental derangement, reading extensively for five months in this and allied subjects. Before he would write he must feel himself master.

If we must find lesser reason for his study of medicine this speculation may intrigue. It was an effort to escape from weariness with theology and philosophy. The student, awarded a doctorate for his thesis upon Kant (apparently a critical investigation but in fact a spiritual searching), who had entered the temple of philosophy with Hegel, Spinoza and Plato but had come out with Omar Khayyam, this passionate student searching for a life-philosophy instead of drinking beer or boating with girls, to this reader of volumes upon Jesus, Paul, Kant, Bach, there had come, while still a young man, the mood of Faust. "I have thoroughly mastered philosophy and—to my sorrow—theology too, and here I stand, poor fool that I am, just as wise as before . . . I am called doctor and have been leading my pupils by the nose." *

Not so weary as Faust perhaps, for Schweitzer was just over thirty, he felt how wearisome it is in the humanities that you have no pole star certainties, no

* Goethe, part 1, l. 1.

whirlwind arguments, no masterful affirmation; only an abundance of probabilities, arguments and negations. What shall a man believe that is sure as gravitation, certain as the tides, deep-rooted as an oak tree?

This is the first important occasion when the dominant mood of Schweitzer's spiritual experience may have been in tune with Goethe. This passing weariness with ideas, theories, knowledge, is the true beginning of the "Reverence for Life" ethic. A passionate search in philosophy and theology, a keen sense of frustration, inadequacy, an impatience with mere words, a plunging into concrete manly labour, then the vision, the truth, the certainty—last stage of all, the return to philosophy and theology (or as Goethe pictured it, disenchantment, tilling of the rough hard field, then heaven and beatitude)—this is the completed spiral of Schweitzer's spiritual life, round which we have travelled one third the way.

We are still far from his illumination, but we are moving toward it. This fresh joy, this intellectual relief of the theorist who now finds in medicine that every statement must be based on fact, this scientific regard for proof, appealed to his Faustian mood. "To deal with realities that could be determined with exactitude" * was satisfying to him as the work on practical government was satisfying to Goethe. Soon he found that the recording of isolated objective facts concerning men, however scientific the recording, gave no insight to why we are in this world. Destiny did not allow Schweitzer to escape from his insistent questions any more than conscience would permit Goethe to escape from his responsibilities.

In time, this mood of weariness with cosmic question and earthly answer, this joy in the scientific question and the factual answer, passed from him and he returned with new zest to the humanities, found deeper

* *L. & T.*, p. 127.

joy in asking the questions of Job, Isaiah and Paul. His recovered keenness is in this sentence: "... only reflective knowledge of the Universal Being and of the relation to it of the individual human being is knowledge worthy a man's striving." * If, as Schweitzer maintains, all art is one inspiration whatever the particular medium, and if poetry, music and painting are but differing expression of a common experience, this phase of his pilgrimage finds prototype in Goethe's "The Night Scene of Faust," Bach's "When in deepest need," and Rembrandt's "The School of Anatomy."

Business Capacity

Impractical professors are a byword, but Schweitzer is as practical as any business man. He will examine a packing case to see that the nails are rightly driven in, will buy, order for dispatch, or see to rail and ship charges, as if business aptitude were his chief talent. For his projected hospital in Central Africa he had an available capital of £1,400, a possible royalty income of £200, and the good will of a circle of friends. These were his total assets.

He proposed to build a tropical hospital, estimated annual cost £600, equip it for surgical work, maintain it as a free service helped only by the meagre offerings the natives might give. He was married, had no sure provision for his wife or future. In 1913 the war threatened, and so clearly did he see its coming that he took gold with him instead of notes, a useful foresight as events proved.

The beginning, as also the carrying through, of his hospital enterprise reveals him as that unusual combination, a man of God, moved by a great, a simple faith that his needs will be provided for, yet also a practical man aware without instruction how best to husband or spend his resources. George Müller was one other

* *L. & T.*, p. 127.

such, but it is a rare combination. Despite cinema fashions we still admire a man who rises above self. A soul deeper than that known to cynical dramatists responds to the moral heroism of which we would like to feel ourselves capable. To forsake all and follow him, to yield worldly success because love makes you feel life's immemorial pain, is a witness that appeals to all.

There must be no sentiment in the mind of the hero when he undertakes the venture; this only enters into our later appreciation. He must be a man of business, know how to count packing cases, know what rates of discount to expect, what wages are honourable, and what service can be expected. People like Müller, Grenfell, Somervell, Gandhi, Kagawa, would certainly have succeeded had they given their attention to soap, ships, or newspapers. They too, because of drive, foresight, leadership, would have amassed wealth. They are practical men; always look at a cheque before signing.

The cold sanity of the decision to go, the awareness that folks may kick a stone in front of you rather than spread a carpet, all of this was so sane, it might have been peasant's decision to take a cow to market. If you decide to do the unusual be quite sure you can face failure: and see that you previously qualified as worthy a big job. He has no patience with the swelled heads prepared to serve goodness if only they are a Major: first, get your sergeant's stripes. For the many who cannot go to a Lambaréné his advice is commonsense with a halo. Get your livelihood, but, on the side, help someone: always he stresses the personal touch. You will then be part of the hidden forces of goodness.

The first few months of 1913 were spent buying his African outfit. Here again the unusual character of his adventure is apparent. Medical missionaries as a rule have but to go out to an equipped hospital; the central

office attends to all materials. From long experience it knows what to send, quantities and style of packing, route of dispatch, rules of foreign governments or agents. All of this Schweitzer had to learn. He was his own buyer, his own dispatch clerk, quite often his own packer.

Only people with tropical experience can appreciate this. To get all the equipment safely out, foreseeing the how and the when, reckoning so long till the next supply can arrive, is work. He had just finished his medical course when he had at once to plan supplies of drugs, lint, bandages, with no experience to help; he had to buy a surgical outfit, food stocks and building implements; he had to know what to take from Europe, what he could buy on the African coast, and what he could get on the river Ogowe.

This but sketches the hundred and one things which he had to think about in preparing to go out. Just while he was planning, estimating, buying, nailing, writing labels, noting where the tinned milk, the bandages, and the surgical knives had been packed, he would be called away to advise about an organ: a church committee was anxious to have the advice of a leading authority on organ building before he left the country.

Dean Swift remarked that the vestry could easily have paved the church with wooden blocks if only they had put their heads together. Not so frank, though as impatient of stupidity, Schweitzer would plead for the life of their old organ, suggest in what way they could add to its range or increase its mechanical usefulness; always he would use his influence against modern organs if the old could be preserved. Then he would return to his packing and preparations. By way of relief he continued his study of Paul, or played Bach, with a sense of near parting.

There is a tendency to excuse business slackness in a

minister; he is thought to be above such matters. Some play up to this, never attempting what Schweitzer asserts is a necessary character training, to discipline themselves in what they do not like. It is no more congenial to him than to any other scholar to see carefully to it that the needles are not lost, to answer with his own pen every letter, to inquire about shipping rates, but this was part of the work and he carried it through with his usual thoroughness.

When his Boswell writes, this attention to detail will be illustrated and emphasized. Nature astonishes not only by the magnificence of the Swiss Alps, her attention to detail in even the wing of a moth astonishes. Like his master Goethe, Schweitzer is one with nature, magnificent in his great works of creation, careful of every detail in lesser affairs. The volumes on Bach, Jesus and Ethics are not the only works to admire. That he can purchase, oversee the packing, insure the dispatch of two hundred cases of mixed goods, see that nothing is forgotten, is a noteworthy attention to detail. Even Boots, Chemists, would pay tribute, for the variety of merchandise suggests their own business: quinine, antipyrin, bromide of potassium, salol, dermatol, morphia, scopolemin, chloral hydrate, cotton wool, bed and table linen, bandages, sheets, towels, personal wear, condensed milk, safety pins, surgical instruments, ink, blotting paper, and much else.

A pen snapshot gives a picture of him gathering his African outfit: "He had not, he explained, a moment to sit still that day, but would I come with him in a taxi while he did some errands, and we could talk between times? So, for a couple of hours or more, we rushed over half Paris, stopping here to pick up a set of surgical instruments—which I understand some friend had presented to him for use abroad—at another place to visit an hospital—he was at that time taking a post graduate course in tropical medicine—at another to

make some arrangements for a forthcoming organ recital.

"In the interval he talked untiringly, about theology, English theologians—about whom he asked some shrewd questions—politics, his own plans, a Cambridge friend who had visited him in Strassburg, and so forth."*

Mr. Montgomery also gives this impression of his appearance: ". . . a tall broad-shouldered man in the late thirties, powerfully built, but even according to English standards, not excessively stout. He has a pleasant dark eye, dark hair worn rather short, with no suggestion of the dilettante, features blunt but well cut, with the strong chin of the man of action: the whole personality keenly alive and magnetic."

If to the first impression of power, charm is added, so that in the dominant character no arrogance is present, we have the man as everyone meets him. "To splendid physique and untiring energy was added a winning charm of temper and manners, a tact for all society."† True of Leonardo da Vinci, it is also true of Schweitzer; his ten talents are tied with an attractive ribbon.

A New Commandment

Preparations complete, having closed his European life, he left for Africa. Music, teaching, and financial independence, The Threefold Sacrifice, all tribute to the service Love required of him, like Gautama, in middle life he went out from his people, his country, his comfort, that amongst the poorest of the poor, the neglected African, he might be "our Doctor." His wife, she had trained as a nurse that she might the better help him, was "truest comrade."

"The church bells of Gunsbach had just ceased ringing for the afternoon service on Good Friday, 1913, when the train appeared round the corner of the wood,

* *Hibbert Journal*.

† Anon.

and the journey to Africa began.” * Though the nature of the African season determined the date of leaving, coincidence appointed the appropriate day.

When he sailed for Africa the newspapers were reporting Herr von Jagow’s view on the Balkan League. Herr Bassemmer was talking on the navy, proud that it was strong enough to deter England. Herr von Bethman Hollweg was talking about the army: the belly of Europe rumbled. Schweitzer, one tiny fraction of the conscience, acted. The sacrifice and the act endure.

As no writer can describe the St. Matthew Passion—it must be heard—neither can his work in Africa be fitly summarized—his own story must be read. The likeness is deliberate. The St. Matthew Passion is alone adequate to cover the African venture, the joy of the journey and the disappointments, the magnificence of the aim, the apparent failure and eventual triumph.

Even now, thirty-six years later, it is apparent there was something akin to madness in the undertaking; one man and his wife, without the support of a missionary society, with a paltry thousand pounds, to establish a hospital in darkest Africa. From a cursory reading of *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest*, it is easy to miss the full significance. It might be only the story of hospital building. But this is to fail in faith. If the book is read once for the story and again for the spirit, during the second reading the power of the doctor will create a rapture in the soul and convict of shame that our own life is so lacking in sacrifice.

Bearing his own expenses Schweitzer desired to share work at a mission station. His application was opposed, he was not orthodox. Though finally the committee agreed to accept his offer one man resigned from the board as protest. What a strange immortality for narrow-minded sincerity to achieve.

* *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest*, p. 10.

Though Schweitzer chose to work at an established mission station, pleased to share the hardship of the little community, he was not a member of the mission staff. He was a doctor, on his own charges in Africa, commissioned to establish a hospital, with enough money for two years, firmly assured that thereafter, if God approved the work, support for its continuance would be forthcoming.

Though, later, conducting religious services in his hospital, though preaching the gospel of Christ, he differed from most missionaries in the motive which sent him out. They believe that Jesus was above and beyond the common thought of the doctors of the law, they believe Jesus was a tender gracious Master who anticipated their enlightenment; Schweitzer asserts that Jesus shared the apocalyptic ideas of his generation, that he was a heroic figure of dynamic energy. So where some others go to the heathen to proclaim the saving power of Christ (their motive to increase the number of the redeemed), Schweitzer goes to do penance for the wrongs that Africa has suffered at the hands of the whites, moved by compassion to relieve their suffering. Though the service rendered by the two has a like appearance there is a difference. In this motive which he exalts and typifies civilized man deepens civilization.

To grasp this motive is essential if one would know his Jesus and meet his Bach. His thought and his life are one. Always he insists that Jesus, Paul and Bach were conditioned by the thought of their age. What is enduring is not the form of their work but the spirit that makes their work live. Not the message of Paul but the fevered devotion to love lives in our heart and experience; not a cantata but the sense of eternity within the work is the significance of Bach. Schweitzer, only believing what scholarship allows him, accepts modern enlightenment but shows that spirit and devo-

tion may still render an unconditional tribute to the demand of abiding compassionate love.

When rightly understood there is no loss of enthusiasm in the new enlightenment. Always a liberal, Schweitzer realizes that his teaching may take from Christians their old-time assurances and the consequent evangelizing zeal, but this only because they have not entered into a true and full understanding of the gospel. When once the ethic of reverence for life, absolute devotion to love, has fired their heart and instructed their mind, they will be eager as any of the pioneers of old to share with the primitives their religious joy and medical privileges. They cannot be more eager but devotion can be as strong. Schweitzer not only writes this, he lives it. He is illustration of his own ethic in working clothes.

From Fowlhouse to Hospital

“River and Forest . . .! Who can really describe the first impression they make? We seemed to be dreaming! Pictures of antediluvian scenery which elsewhere had seemed to be merely the creation of fancy, are now seen in real life. It is impossible to say where the river ends and the land begins, for a mighty network of roots, clothed with bright-flowering creepers, projects right into the water. Clumps of palms and palm trees, ordinary trees spreading out widely with green boughs, single trees of the pine family shooting up to a towering height in between them, wide fields of papyrus clumps as tall as a man, with big fan-like leaves, and amid all this luxuriant greenery the rotting stems of dead giants shooting up to heaven. . . . In every gap in the forest a water mirror meets the eye: at every bend in the river a new tributary shows itself. A heron flies heavily up and then settles on a dead tree trunk: white birds and blue birds skim over the water, and high in the air a pair of ospreys circle. Then—yes,

there can be no mistake about it!—from the branch of a palm there hang and swing—two monkey tails! Now the owners of the tails are visible. We are really in Africa!” *

In July 1913 he commenced work in Africa. All that was given to him was a small bungalow: with that he must begin. Despite strict orders that for some weeks no patients were to attend till the Doctor had a building ready, so great was the need of the natives that at once patients arrived. He could not turn them away. They must be attended to in the open air outside the bungalow and so a few shelves in his own house had to serve as dispensary. As necessity soon demanded surgical work, a disused fowlhouse was promoted to serve as operating theatre, and there operations on strangulated hernia, tumours, and other serious cases were successfully treated. The Doctor's first assistant in the surgery was Joseph, who had been trained as a butcher. When translating the symptoms Joseph would express himself in the language of the kitchen: “This man's right leg of mutton (gigot) hurts him. . . . This woman has a pain in her upper left cutlet.” Who will be the Laurence Housman making Joseph and Schweitzer significant as Juniper and Francis?

The natives themselves talk of their symptoms by saying that “a worm is tormenting them.” “If I quiet a colic with tincture of opium, the patient comes next day beaming with joy and tells me the worm has been driven out of his body but is now settled in his head and is devouring his brain: will I please give him something to banish the worm from his head too? . . . If only you could have watched the eloquent gestures with which an old woman with heart complaint described how, thanks to digitalis, she could once more breathe and sleep, because the medicine had made the

* *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest*, p. 22.

worm crawl right away down to her feet! ” * To insure that directions are faithfully carried through is difficult. Patients may eat the ointment or rub the powder into their skins.

What to us is merely a slight service, can mean to them much suffering spared. In no way detracting from the value of his major surgery the Doctor lays stress on how helpful can be such little services as “an ointment compounded of flower of sulphur, crude palm oil, remains of oil from sardine tins, and soft soap. In a tin which once contained sterilized milk the patient receives a quantity of this ointment with which to give himself at home two more rubbings. The success of this is wonderful, the itching ceasing to worry on the second day, and this ointment has in a very few weeks made me famous far and wide.” † Over the first months the work was carried on in the fowlhouse or in the open air; this was most exhausting as it meant walking to and from the bungalow for medicine and constant exposure to the climate. Compensating all was the joy of working and helping. Schweitzer had become “Oganga of the African Forest.”

The first hospital was built in spite of unexpected difficulties. The usual troubles, the laziness of the primitive, his lack of a property sense, his irresponsibility, all might be considered normal handicaps but, added to these, was the lack of labour as the timber traffic lured most of it to its service: even when labour is obtained trouble is not over.

“As ‘skilled’ men the carpenters are in receipt of really high wages, yet they cannot drive a nail straight unless a white man is at their side, and if the white man leaves them to work alone, they promptly sit down for a quiet smoke, or fade into the bush for a while. This, however, is often better than if they go on working. For should a spirit so unusual move them, they have

* *P.F.*, pp. 35 and 38.

† *ibid.*, p. 36.

an extraordinary capacity for ruining valuable materials." *

Yet the hospital must be built, the site cleared and levelled beforehand. Clearing means cutting dense vegetation, destroying the roots ; levelling was especially heavy work, for the site was on the slope to the river. " After a world of trouble the mission managed to secure four or five labourers whose laziness was perfectly magnificent, till my patience at last gave way."

Seeking for new help the doctor secured eight sturdy carriers on loan from a timber merchant: " I promised them handsome pay and took a spade in hand myself, while the black foreman lay in the shade of a tree and occasionally threw us an encouraging word. With two days of steady work we had got the soil cleared away and the spot levelled. The labourers went off with their pay, but on the way back, I regret to say, they stopped at a store, and, in spite of my warnings, turned it all into spirits. They reached home in the middle of the night, blind drunk, and the next day were fit for nothing. But we were now in a position to begin building the hospital." †

This unusual work, the building of a tropical hospital, was completed by one who had previously been organist and lecturer.

How much is hidden behind the foregoing sentence : natives going off with the hatchets ; the cutting of wood to the wrong size ; the death of a relative and consequent holidays for three days' mourning. The wet season, will it ever stop ? It rains, drenches, torrents ; brooks become rivers and rivers raging torrents ; hours on end, days without ceasing, there is rain, more rain, cloud-bursts. The dry season—the nights have the mosquito and the days have the tsetse fly : " to get blood it can pierce the thickest cloth, but it is extremely cautious and artful, and evades cleverly all

* *British Bulletin.*

† *P.F.*, p. 44.

blows of the hands. The moment it feels that the body on which it has settled makes the slightest movement, it flies off and hides itself on the side of the boat." *

Confined to the mission station as the least oppressive place in the wet season the climate begins its deadly strain: "the heat is intolerable, for on either side of the narrow passages rises the forest in an impenetrable wall nearly one hundred feet high, and between these walls not a breath of air stirs." One seems to be living in a prison. The malarial chill so often contracted ruins the early weeks of the dry season. Constant perspiration by day and damp chilly nights make two years the longest term of residence advisable for a European. No wonder that staying four years Dr. and Madame Schweitzer lost their health. Despite effort Madame Schweitzer was not able to return to the station for some years.

The hospital was built. How much that meant to the people of the district. In the first nine months two thousand patients were examined: rheumatism, pneumonia, abdominal dropsy, tumours, hernia, skin eruptions, malaria, sleeping sickness, heart disease, a catalogue of misery and pain. Schweitzer insists that the African is as sensitive to pain as the European. When this is realized and it is remembered that he is the only doctor for a radius of two hundred miles it is easy to appreciate that the restlessness which he insists his ethic of reverence will evoke in the awakened conscience brought him labour and weariness.

An old man with leprosy and his wife arrive: "The poor creatures have rowed themselves two hundred and fifty miles upstream to visit the doctor, and can hardly stand for exhaustion." † Consider—rowing from London to Newcastle, from New York to Boston, to find a doctor.

From July to November 1913 the fowlhouse served as

* *P.F.*, p. 42.

† *ibid.*, p. 68.

hospital, but afterwards the corrugated iron shed was ready: two rooms, thirteen feet square, with two small rooms for dispensary and sterilizing, and the first of the three hospitals built by Schweitzer was complete. Soon a visiting room and a dormitory with other buildings were added. Isolation of dysentery was difficult. How about the cases of sleeping sickness, and the insane? These must wait, but he was unhappy that he could not care for them also. Urgent duties crowded the days with building, medicine distribution, frequent operation and letters to Europe.

Madame Schweitzer was as busy as the doctor himself. Her household duties were onerous because the division of labour common among natives is most aggravating. Cook and washerwoman have their duties beyond which they will never go; if finished, they rest. This might be well if they were reliable but they are not. Everything must be locked; you are a foolish person, deserving to lose, if you leave anything about; "it goes for a walk." The primitive steals just what attracts though it can have no value to him. There disappeared one day "the copy of Bach's Passion Music (St. Matthew) into which I had written the organ accompaniment, which I had worked out very carefully. This feeling of never being safe from the stupidest piece of theft brings one sometimes almost to despair, and to have to keep everything locked up and turn oneself into a walking bunch of keys adds a terrible burden to life." *

Months passed. It was New Year 1914. The hut for sleeping sickness was built; in six years this destructive disease reduced the inhabitants of Uganda from 300,000 to 100,000. The treatment of this disease gives a great deal of work: "Its diagnosis is a terribly complicated business because the significance of every attack of fever, of every persistent headache, of every

* *P.F.*, p. 64.

prolonged attack of sleeplessness, and of all the rheumatic pains must be gauged with the help of the microscope. Moreover, this examination of the blood is, unfortunately, by no means simple, but takes a great deal of time, for it is only very seldom that these pale, thin parasites, about one eighteen-thousandth of a millimetre long, are to be found in any considerable number in the blood. So far I have only examined one case in which three or four were to be seen together. Even when the disease is certainly present one can, as a rule, examine several drops of blood one after another before discovering a single trypanosome, and to scrutinize each drop properly needs at least ten minutes: I may, therefore, spend an hour over the blood of a suspected victim, examining four or five drops without finding anything, and even then have no right to say there is no disease; there is still a long and tedious testing process which must be applied. This consists in taking ten cubic centimetres of blood from the vein of one of the sufferer's arms, and keeping it revolving centrifugally for an hour according to certain prescribed rules, at the same time pouring off at intervals the outer rings of blood. The trypanosomes are expected to have collected into the last few drops, and these are put under the microscope; but if there is again a negative result, it is not safe to say the disease is not present. If there are no trypanosomes today, I may find them ten days hence." * This conscientiousness in serving the African is also in his intellectual work.

Whirlpools and hippopotamuses add danger to river journeys, the more so because native boats are only hollowed out tree trunks, with no keels to balance them. Leopards, elephants and monkeys abound in the jungle; poisonous snakes also. Mosquitoes and tsetse flies are everywhere; and, penetrating even into drawers, scorpions and other poisonous insects; you

* *P.F.*, p. 84.

must never put your hand in before looking. A scorpion sting can be dangerous, and they do appear vicious, or is it our fear that gives horror to them?

"When we went a little later to our rooms, Frl. Schmitz was welcomed in hers by a spider almost as big as the palm of a hand, a welcome which removed any doubts as to our being in Africa. We tried to catch the spider, but with a few hasty rushes it disappeared behind a packing case, and we were too tired to continue the chase. Two days later we had become so Africanized, that Frl. Schmitz could sit at her table writing and let the spider climb undisturbed about the wall. Today she regards it as a pleasant room mate that catches mosquitoes for her." *

In the tropics weevils, ants and termites are added to life's difficulties. Whether these annoyances caused even Schweitzer to lose his temper is not recorded but they have so provoked the present writer. Tins have to be soldered, even so the weevils may somehow get in and all food is dust. Or traveller ants come not in battalions but in legions: "A peculiar scratching and clucking of the fowls gives us warning of the danger, and then there is no time to be lost. I jump out of bed, run to the fowlhouse, and open the door, through which the birds rush out. . . . Meanwhile my wife has taken the bugle from the wall and blown it three times, which is the signal for N'Kendju and some men from the hospital to bring bucketsful of water from the river. When they arrive, the water is mixed with lysol, and the ground all round the house and under it is sprinkled. While we are doing this we get very badly treated by the warriors, for they creep over us and bite us vigorously. I once counted nearly fifty on me. They bite themselves so firmly in with their jaws that one cannot pull them off. If one tries to do so the body comes away, but the jaws remain in the flesh and have to be taken

* *B.B.*

out separately afterwards. At last the ants move on, leaving thousands of corpses in the puddles, for they cannot stand the smell of lysol; and so ends the little drama which we have been playing in the darkness, with no light but that of a lantern which my wife has been holding." * And termites . . . but Schweitzer's own book must be read. Already it ranks as one of the classics of mission adventure.

During this first period in Africa he was able to continue his organ practice on the piano with pedal attachment which had been presented to him by the Bach Society of Paris when he left Europe, thoughtful testimony to their appreciation of his playing, his skill was not lost as he had feared it would be.

While working in Africa, clearing the jungle, setting plantations, operating on serious cases, giving medicine and attention to all, wondering how to care for the insane, Schweitzer was always reverting in thought to the supreme quest of his life—what shall a man believe? He, more than any other, had disturbed the certainties; he must therefore for himself and for others discover that which must be believed. As Gautama, renouncing a kingdom, was granted enlightenment, so Schweitzer, renouncing academic security, after some years' medical work, was granted illumination.

"I had to undertake a longish journey on the river. . . . Since I had been in too much of a hurry to provide myself with enough food for the journey, they let me share the contents of their cooking pot. Slowly we crept upstream, laboriously feeling—it was the dry season—for the channels between the sandbanks. Lost in thought I sat on the deck of the barge, struggling to find the elementary and universal conception of the ethical which I had not discovered in any philosophy. Sheet after sheet I covered with disconnected sentences, merely to keep myself concentrated on the problem.

* *P.F.*, p. 144.

Late on the third day, at the very moment when, at sunset, we were making our way through a herd of hippopotamuses, there flashed upon my mind, unforeseen and unsought, the phrase, 'Reverence for Life.' The iron door had yielded: the path in the thicket had become visible. Now I had found my way to the idea in which world- and life-affirmation and ethics are contained side by side! Now I knew that the world-view of ethical world- and life-affirmation, together with its ideals of civilization, is founded in thought." *

He had come to the elemental, that which cannot be denied. He had his phrase which held within it, as a mustard tree is in the seed, a life joy and an ethical urge. Persuaded that, in a manner not before achieved by any other thinker, he had joined cosmic pessimism and human optimism he turned again to do a practical job, directed by conscience and pity.

This was his vision, holding within its brightness two themes, the tremendous mystery in which man lives for seventy years, the righteousness which exalts a nation; both themes disciplined by reason. In him, in that experience, the memory of western mankind drew from its divinest hour in Galilee courage for the next advance in social goodness. "Religion is the serious business of the human race." †

Catastrophe

So remote is Lambaréné that only about Christmas 1915 did some of the natives from the interior learn of the war. "Ten men killed already in this war," said an old Pahouin. "Why, then, don't the tribes meet for a palaver?"

If one likens Schweitzer's life to Bach's Mass in B Minor, the "Kyrie Eleison" would be his early theological controversy, strife and victory; the "Gratias Agimus" his musical triumphs, cheerfulness and tran-

* *L. & T.*, p. 185.

† Toynbee, *Civilization*, p. 94.

quillity; the "Et Incarnatus" his work in Africa, sacrifice and redemption; the "Crucifixus" his war experience, particularly 1916-18. Only this low solemn melody is adequate to interpret the deep sadness.

The two civilizations, French and German, are so perfectly one in his culture, that the war to him was tragic as a parents' divorce is to a sensitive daughter. Sad as Thomas Hardy brooding over Napoleonic massacres, Schweitzer watched from afar Mons and Passchendaele. One day, when he was a youth, sitting on the banks of the Rhine, as he was closing a huge historical tome, a little insect fluttered in between the pages. He spared its life, but said to himself, "I am like that poor little midge, in danger of being crushed under the weight of history." Now, years later, the Spirit Sinister banged the volume of life together—and nearly crushed him.

His health, and the health of Madame Schweitzer, was failing; exhaustion had set in. Only two years in the district is right for Europeans and they had been there nearly four. Food was scarce, money from Europe could not come, he had no mission behind him. For a little time they were helped by having a house on the coast given to them; their principal food there was the herring he caught in the Cape Lopez Bay. So dire was the need of the natives however that at grave personal risk to health, after this holiday on the coast, they returned to Lambaréné, and continued their work. They returned to the damp airless clearing to bandage, operate and manage as best they could with the meagre supplies remaining.

Then catastrophe fell. The war insanity ordered, at one day's notice, that they be arrested and brought to prison in France; from Lambaréné and its healing service to internment. There was no opportunity given to pack. Fortunately the ship was two days late in leaving, which gave just time to pack surgical

instruments, give to a Mr. Ford the manuscript of *Civilization and Ethics* and leave for prison. Twelve years later Schweitzer was to write upon Paul, but this, his own journey to Rome, was too severe an initiation.

The journey was not lost time; being a prisoner he was not free to write so he learned by heart some of Bach's fugues and Widor's Sixth Organ Symphony. This journey, and the prison experiences which followed are not written of with any bitterness. "It was part of the madness of the world. We must forget that time of hatred and fear," he said later to a friend. "Forgiveness" is his chief insistence; he writes from conviction and practice. The overlong residence in Africa, the lack of European food during the war years while in Africa, and the later prison confinement, led to serious illness. When, after the armistice, he was liberated and returned to Strassburg, he had to enter hospital to undergo a dangerous operation.

On his return to civil life he was appointed vicar to St. Thomas' and served as assistant doctor at the Civic Hospital for Skin Diseases. He was in debt for his Lambaréné hospital, in poor health, and felt "as if he might be a lost piece of money that had rolled under the wardrobe and been forgotten." * Armistice passions were perhaps even worse than war passions, few interested themselves in theology or music, his African work was crushed. But he continued his life-work bravely, doggedly, though he might have been tempted to say:

Great men are meteors that consume themselves
To light the earth. This is my burnt-out hour.†

Easter 1920 brought resurrection; in the story of his life, Bach trumpets may proclaim in an upstarting phrase "Et resurrexit." In response to an invitation

* *L. & T.*, p. 217.

† Hardy, "Dynasts," p. 520.

from Archbishop Soderblom he travelled to Sweden. There he lectured, gave organ recitals, and was encouraged to write his great book *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest*. More important, he and his wife recovered their health. Further, he earned enough money from concerts to pay off his hospital debts.

He was now fully re-established as Bach organist—so fully, that on the fifth Sunday in Lent, 1921, he “had the joy of playing the organ at the first rendering of the St. Matthew Passion by the Orfeo Catala, Barcelona. It was the première rendering in Spain.” * He was now widely recognized as a theologian and a thinker. He toured Europe and lectured in many universities on The Eschatological Jesus, Paul, Culture and Civilization, Christianity and the Religions of the World. “In April, 1921, he resigned his position as vicar and doctor in Strassburg, depending on the organ and his pen for maintenance. To enjoy quietness for writing his *Philosophy of Civilization* he took his wife and daughter to his father at the parsonage at Gunsbach.” †

The year 1922 was devoted to lecturing, concert recitals and writing. Aware of the man and his spirit, it is no surprise that he determined to return to Africa. In terms of his ethic, which he always practises, the happiness of this recognition as artist and thinker must be acknowledged in a sacrifice worthy the joy, and the sacrifice, a return to Africa, will be the more severe because his wife cannot go with him, her health not being sufficiently recovered. He writes beautifully of her willingness that he may go.

Just as he had decided to return to Africa he was offered an important professorship; it would have been easy to gain approval for acceptance. Was he not now forty-seven, a dangerous age at which to return to Africa? Had he not already suffered? Further, against the risk and hardship of hospital work in Africa,

* *L. & T.*, p. 229.

† *loc. cit.*

was the peace and quiet of a professor's life. To renounce this is hard and exceptional. Although his erudition makes him a Gamaliel of the Pharisees, his spirit is of Paul.

As Damascus preceded Paul's first missionary journey but no special event opened the later journeys, so *The Threefold Sacrifice* preceded 1913, but no such dramatic event introduced 1924; only the quiet determination of one choosing the hard task. We must be careful not to offend by intemperate eulogy. So anxious is he to avoid sainthood that he has written of *The Threefold Sacrifice*:

"There happened to me, what happened to Abraham when he prepared to sacrifice his son. I, like him, was spared the sacrifice. The piano with pedal attachment, built for the tropics, which the Paris Bach Society had presented to me, and the triumph of my own health over the tropical climate had allowed me to keep up my skill on the organ. During the many quiet hours which I was able to spend with Bach during my four and a half years of loneliness in the jungle I had penetrated deeper into the spirit of the works, I returned to Europe, therefore, not as an artist who had become an amateur, but in full possession of my technique and privileged to find that, as an artist, I was more esteemed than before. . . . For the renunciation of my teaching activities in Strassburg University I found compensation in opportunities of lecturing in very many others. . . . And if I did for a time lose my financial independence, I was able to win it again by means of organ and pen. . . . That I was let off *The Threefold Sacrifice* I had already offered was for me the encouraging experience which in all the difficulties brought upon me, and upon so many others, by the fateful postwar period has buoyed me up, and made me ready for every effort and every renunciation." *

* *L. & T.*, p. 230.

Return to Africa

In February, 1924, he left Europe accompanied by Noel Gillespie: the same driving spirit which so possessed Paul, of whom he had just been writing, possessed him. He took with him this Oxford undergraduate of eighteen. Coincidence brought about a strange likeness.

Though he had been spared much of the sacrifice he was prepared to make in 1913, was now established as a writer, there was a madness in even this second return. One man and a youth set out to work in Africa because a generation ago white men traded cruelly in black ivory, and compensation to the Negro was due. Schweitzer, with one youth, set out to help repay the white man's debt. Moral heroism is often near to the ridiculous.

This young man tells a story. He was about to put on his waterproof when he saw fall to the ground a destructive beetle: because of this his coat would leak at one point. He was about to tramp upon the beetle when a hand was laid upon his shoulder. "Gently! Noel, remember you are a guest in its country."

Readers of *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest* will recall the incident when he paused to lift a frog out of the foundation hole before the beam was slipped into place. Readers of his *Civilization and Ethics* will remember that to prolong the life of a permissible insect is a moral act: even a worm can be helped, if it has strayed on to the hard macadam road from the nearby grass. Throughout his life animals have featured in his affection. One sacrifice made when he first went to Africa was the loss of his dog, Sultan. The old Newfoundland could not travel. It died before he reached Lambaréné. Another animal friend was Julot, the chimpanzee. There are many of these animal stories from a later period.

The Doctor gives a little present to any Negro bring-

ing to the hospital an animal or bird that would otherwise die in the forest. There is Theodore, a little antelope. His gambols are a source of endless delight. He wears a bell around his neck to tell where he is. At nightfall Theodore seeks out the doctor to get his banana or mandarin. Then he disappears. On one occasion he ate a page or two of Chinese thinkers.* Parsifal, the pelican, comes also for his banana and fish. Fritz, the owl, likes fish too, and takes care that Parsifal does not get more than his share. Ratelie, a porcupine, had to be bottle-fed; he had been abandoned in the forest. He always came to the dinner table for dessert: he liked peanuts. The hippo is the only animal that the Doctor has not welcomed to the hospital. The sensitivity to animal joys and pains, so happy a feature of our modern ethical awareness, has been well served by Schweitzer. This recent development of man's moral life he takes one step further.

This will introduce the building of the second hospital: "The journey up the Ogowe was for me the most delightful part of the voyage. What a magnificent river it is; in one place flowing along broad and majestic, though in another narrow and small, in another dividing itself into arms and channels, and forming islands or lakes. On the banks is the thick primeval forest which here and there hangs over the water, and then retreats to make room for big stretches of papyrus. Ospreys and other birds, unknown to us, fly up as we approach; charming little herons balance themselves on the papyrus stems; numbers of swallows seem like old acquaintances as they skim over the water just in front of us, exactly as they do in Europe." †

Troubles awaited arrival at Lambaréné. While Noel superintended unloading, the Doctor walked up to ". . . the hospital like one in a dream. It might be the Sleeping Beauty's place of concealment! Grass and

* A Schweitzer MSS.

† B.B.

brushwood are growing where once stood the wards which I constructed with so much trouble. Above what is still standing are stretched the boughs of big trees which I remember as little saplings. There are still standing the building of corrugated iron in which we had our operating room, consulting room, and dispensary, and another in which we housed some of the patients. These two are still in fairly good condition, though their roofs of palm leaves are hopelessly damaged." *

Then the search for leaf-tiles began, needed to re-roof the buildings; but though the rehabilitation of the hospital would require months, patients arrived at once: heart disease, tumours, sleeping sickness, as nine years before: but the first task was to repair the buildings at once; the roof especially must be covered. Schweitzer was half builder, half doctor; both went together, each worked into the other's hand. The doctor would give *stovotsol*, a miraculous pastille that dries up sores in four days, if the builder could have *raphia* leaves: but the doctor half could not hold to the bargain if a mother was too poor to bring the leaves.

Written somewhat later this letter gives the spirit of the occasion: "Here I am, then, with my helpers once more sunk in African worries. But heavily as they often weigh upon us, we bear them with patience, because we have the opportunity of doing so much good, and because our kind friends in Europe take off our shoulders the worst worry of all—the worry which so often weighs down works of love, I mean anxiety about the supply of all the material needs for our continued existence. These lines are meant to be an expression of deep gratitude, and to renew to our friends the assurance that with the means they place at our disposal some of the poorest of the poor have their misery lessened and lightened." †

Day by day new cases came; some with light sores,

* *More from Primeval Forest*, p. 8.

† *B.B.*

others incurable. Sufferers sometimes were brought secretly and left to die. One of the difficulties is that the natives will have nothing to do with a dead body, or with the digging of a grave, but always go sick or take a holiday when such duty may be required of them. Another difficulty, some patients are grateful and contribute to the passage money of the new doctor, but others are cynical, convinced that this is a clever ruse on the doctor's part to get rich; they have lost all faith in the white man, but accept the medicine and steal the mosquito net when they leave.

New buildings were added, more welcome still, a new doctor arrived . . . then a nursing staff. The hospital grew; first the surgery; then the wards; then the out-houses; then a motor boat from Sweden; then another doctor. While buildings went up and the staff increased, patients crowded to the hospital; its fame spread. Sores and toothache were cured, the lesser pains that can be so painful; sleeping sickness, leprosy, hernia, elephantiasis—the terrible diseases that kill the primitive—are attacked. "On April 1st we attack a growth weighing 72 pounds on a man from near Samkirta. The weight of it had for a long time condemned him to inactivity, and it is of such a size that he can use it as a cushion to sit upon. Although he is still fairly young, he looks like an old man. The operation lasts from 10 o'clock till 3 in the afternoon, and the handling of such a mass makes heavy demands on the physical strength of all three of us." *

Africa had other dangers. Famine threatened, settled, and was fought. Even Schweitzer could not win. He could only mitigate the suffering; this was the little that could be done. The story shows the philosopher turned practical man. Whatever may be achieved, Africa has plenty of other work, stirring appeals to sympathy, especially the insane.

* *M.P.F.*, p. 79.

"Because I have not room enough, I cannot do what I ought for the poor mentally afflicted. The cell which I have for them, a dark den without a window, stands among the buildings which house the sick. I have no lockup room which gets air and sunlight. Noisy mental patients I cannot take in for long periods, because the other patients cannot stand the noise so near. I therefore have to send them back in bonds to their village, where they will very likely be tormented to death, whereas under my care they might be cured. What I suffer at heart in such a case I have never let my helpers know. If I only had a larger building site, I could house the mental patients at a distance from the others and carry out my duty to them as well." *

Other needs, especially that of properly isolating the dysentery quarters, led to an important decision—to move the hospital. Schweitzer consulted no one; he felt the necessity, considered the difficulties, decided and never looked back. It was a tremendous undertaking to build anew, his third hospital, on a virgin site. Moreover, his wife and daughter expected him home in December, 1925, a time that prudence required he should return to Europe to recuperate. This decision demanded an extra year at Lambaréné. Was it wise at the age of fifty?

As in 1913 and 1924 and now late in 1925 the clearing and the building began. If sleeping sickness and dysentery remained constant diseases, so unreliability, stealing habits, and laziness were constant irritations in dealing with native labour; doubly so when commercial wages could not be offered. The work was carried through, and instead of lamenting the difficulties—the rainy season, tsetse-fly, and stifling atmosphere—Schweitzer saw the funny side of things: "As we have in the hospital hardly a man capable of work, I begin, assisted by two loyal helpers, to haul beams and planks

* *M.P.F.*, p. 109.

about myself. Suddenly I catch sight of a Negro in a white suit sitting by a patient whom he had come to visit. 'Hullo friend,' I call out, 'won't you lend us a hand?' 'I am an intellectual and don't drag wood about,' came the answer. 'You're lucky,' I reply, 'I too wanted to become an intellectual, but I didn't succeed.' " *

His skill as a hospital builder is one with his skill as an organ builder; indeed, he used his knowledge of the organ to design an especially cool roof. (He designed his own house in Gunsbach.) For his third hospital he decided to build on piles so that water, the river rising or the floods descending, might pass under the building, but this meant that he must set every single pile himself to make sure that they were true to the perpendicular, set at the correct level.

Characteristic of him, while full of building schemes, meditating a third volume on Civilization, keeping grasp on Bach, he remembered also toads and plants. He was careful always to inspect the bottom of the pit before the heavy beam was slipped into it, lest a toad had jumped in and might be crushed. He insisted, at great trouble, that certain trees should be transplanted, not merely cut down because, unless necessity justifies, life must be held in reverence. Thus in an astonishing manner he carried through the building of his third hospital, using the opportunity to demonstrate a sermon: "Do not needlessly hurt insect, bird or flower; they all have their lives and their joy."

A volume might be written telling the adventure and triumph of the building of the third hospital. We can but say, in January, 1927, staff and patients, cases and instruments, were moved to the new hospital. Again the practical man had triumphed. He could leave the work now that this had been carried through, to enjoy the rest and quietness of a stay in Europe.

* *M.P.F.*, p. 103.

He was more than a year overdue. Others were left to fight dysentery, sleeping sickness, tumours. In addition there was a ward for mental cases.

More important, he left them to continue the fight against superstition, fear and cruelty, for though the hospital was primarily a healing centre, though he went to alleviate suffering, he sought to spread enlightenment and Christianity.

Magic, Black and White

Superstition is dark in this hinterland. Fetishism prevails, cannibalism is not impossible. One of the horrible superstitions is the leopard delusion. Certain men are possessed by the delusion that they are leopards, and therefore must kill men.

“They go on all fours, fastening on their hands and feet real leopard’s claws or iron imitations of them, so as to leave behind them a spoor like that of a leopard; and when they catch a victim, they sever his carotid artery as leopards do. The remarkable and uncanny fact is that most of them have become human leopards involuntarily, having been made members of one of the bands without being aware of it. The band prepares in a human skull a potion made out of the blood of one of their victims, and some man, on whom they have previously fixed, is secretly given some of it in one of his ordinary drinks. Then he is informed that he has drunk the potion, and therefore is from that time one of the band. Nor does any one of them resist. They are all alike dominated by the belief that a magic potion has some magic power, against which no one can successfully fight, and so they obey unresistingly. The next step is a command to take one of their brothers or sisters to some place where he or she can be attacked and killed by the members of the band. Then they must themselves start killing.” *

* *M.P.F.*, p. 6.

These black magics must be combated. Simple Christianity must be preached. Every Sunday therefore a service is held. Mrs. Russell's gramophone plays a solemn tune; the Doctor speaks with two interpreters by his side. Sentence by sentence a simple truth is told; emphasis and story are needed, and so, by a simple way, they are led to prayer. White magic drives out the black. Many of the patients have never been to a service of any kind.

"I cannot demand of my hearers that they should sit as stiff as the faithful in an Alsatian church. I overlook the fact that those who have their fireplaces cook their dinners while they are listening, that another washes and combs her baby's hair, that a man mends his fishing net. Even when a savage makes use of the time to lay his head on a comrade's lap and let him go on a sporting expedition through his hair, I do not stop it. For there are always new people there, and if I were continually to keep on admonishing them during the service, its solemnity would be much more disturbed: so I leave things alone. Nor do I take any notice of the sheep and goats who come and go among my congregation, or of the numerous weaver birds which have nests in the trees nearby and make a noise that forces me to raise my voice."

This is part of a sermon: "Scarcely are you up in the morning and standing in front of your hut, when somebody whom all know to be a bad man comes and insults you. Because the Lord Jesus says that one ought to forgive, you keep silent instead of beginning a palaver.

"Later on your neighbour's goat eats the bananas you were relying on for your dinner. Instead of starting a quarrel with the neighbour, you merely tell him that it was his goat, and that it would be the right thing if he would make it up to you in bananas. But when he contradicts you and maintains that the goat was not

his, you quietly go off and reflect that God causes so many bananas to grow in your plantation that there is no need for you to begin a quarrel on this account. . . .

“In the afternoon when you are about to go and work in your plantation, you discover that somebody has taken away your good bush knife and left you in its place his old one, which has a jagged edge. You know who it is, for you recognize the bush knife. But when you consider that you have forgiven four times, you want to manage to forgive even a fifth time. Although it is a day on which you have experienced much unpleasantness you feel as jolly as if it had been one of the happiest. Why? Because your heart is happy in having obeyed the will of the Lord Jesus!” *

Fellowship in Suffering

Certain passages of his writing are full of the Holy Ghost. Surely as the Canticle of the Sun is St. Francis, this is Schweitzer. “How can I describe my feelings when a poor fellow is brought to me in terrible condition. I am the only person within hundreds of miles that can help him. Because I am here and am supplied by my friends with the necessary means, he can be saved, like those who came before him in the same condition and those who will come after him, while otherwise he would have fallen a victim to the torture. This does not mean merely that I can save his life. We must all die. But that I can save him from days of cruel torture, that is what I feel as my great and ever new privilege. Pain is a more terrible lord of mankind than even death itself.

“So, when the poor, moaning creature comes, I lay my hand on his forehead and say to him: ‘Don’t be afraid! In an hour’s time you will be put to sleep, and when you wake you won’t feel any more pain.’ Very soon he is given an injection of omnipon; the doctor’s

* *Sunday at Lambaréné.*

wife is called to the hospital, and with Joseph's help makes everything ready for the operation. When that is to begin she administers the anaesthetic, and Joseph, in a long pair of rubber gloves, acts as assistant.

"The operation is finished, and in the dimly lighted dormitory I watch for the sick man's awakening. Scarcely has he recovered consciousness when he stares about him and ejaculates again and again: 'I've no more pain! I've no more pain!' . . . His hand feels for mine and will not let it go. Then I begin to tell him and the others who are in the room that it is the Lord Jesus who has told the doctor and his wife to come out to the Ogowe, and that white people in Europe give them the money to live here and cure the sick Negroes. Then I have to answer questions as to who these white people are, where they live, and how they know that the natives suffer so much from sickness. The African sun is shining through the coffee bushes into the dark shed, but we, black and white, sit side by side and feel that we know by experience the meaning of the words: 'and all ye are brethren.' Would that my generous friends in Europe could come out here and live through one such hour!

"And who will make this work possible? The fellowship of those who bear the mark of pain. Who are the members of this fellowship? Those who have learned by experience what physical pain and bodily anguish mean, belong together all the world over. They are united by a secret bond. One and all, they know the horrors of suffering to which man can be exposed, and one and all they know the longing to be free from pain. He who has been delivered from pain must not think he is now free again, and at liberty to take life up just as it was before, entirely forgetful of the past. He is now a 'man whose eyes are open' with regard to pain and anguish, and he must help to overcome those two enemies (so far as human power can control them) and

to bring to others the deliverance which he has himself enjoyed." *

This is the new and high motive that should inspire mission work, a service man to man; it is not one enlightened going out to one benighted, though that may be true, it is simply one who has suffered to one who suffers. He believes that this idea will conquer the world. The last chapter of *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest* is noble writing. It begins a new relationship between the privileged white and the unfortunate coloured.

The last months of 1927 were spent in Europe, lecturing and giving recitals. Two universities bestowed the honorary doctor degree, and the City of Frankfurt awarded him the Goethe prize, an honour accorded to any work of outstanding human value. Nothing now could keep him in Europe; he must return to Africa. Madame Schweitzer accompanied him, but unfortunately had to leave as her health could not endure the climate. Later he visited Europe several times, always quickly returning to his hospital. Fortunately, the hospital established, he was free to visit Europe as his engagements required, without everything collapsing. Investigation into the conquest of tropical disease is now part of the hospital routine. The hencoop of 1913 has become a well-built establishment with European and native staff.

As World War II threatened he was due for a leave of absence and had actually returned to Gunsbach on one of his breaks from Africa. Soon, however, he felt the threatening atmosphere and determined to return at once. He sailed back on the same ship that had brought him to Europe, on her return trip to Africa. He would be with his hospital during whatever emergencies might arise in a new world conflict. So the years of war found him at his post, Head Warden of Goodness.

* *P.F.*, p. 92.

His Seventieth Birthday

He came to his seventieth birthday, on the 14th of January, 1945. When a friend congratulated him on his fiftieth he replied: "Do not congratulate me, rather sympathize with me. I wish I was only thirty. I have so much to do." This will still be true. His own writing is the best description of the birthday celebration by the B.B.C., followed by a wide circle of admirers. It is taken from a letter to a member of the City Temple, a church which has helped his work over many years.

"Picture the scene: the whole staff, my wife and myself and all the European patients gathered together, sitting in front of the radio, the lamps of which were already lit, although the loudspeaker, to begin with, gave out only scratching and spitting noises.

"The heat was terrible! Sweat dripped from our faces and hands. Through the open window which is covered with a mosquito net, we could see the palm trees lightly swaying in the wind, and hear the concert of crickets chirping in the grass. From afar, beyond the river, where is situated a small village, came the sound of the tom-toms. Suddenly, the loudspeaker stops scratching and we hear a tribute from the B.B.C., then a voice introducing the organ piece, then the record itself, and a voice saying: 'Dr. Schweitzer himself is listening at this very moment in Lambaréné.' I was deeply moved.

"And suddenly there is silence again. We hear once more the branches of palm trees softly swaying in wind and the chirping of crickets. We remain seated for a while before leaving the room. The stars twinkle through the palm trees in front of the house.

"After supper the wireless station at Brazzaville transmitted a special programme. They had also taken note of my anniversary and expressed in sympathetic words their thanks for the services I had rendered to the

country, but, unfortunately, these came through very indistinctly, owing to a tornado which swept some parts of the country.

"Thank you for sending me the little volume of sermons on 'The Will of God,' by our friend, Leslie Weatherhead. The gist of them, as you say, has been broadcast. I am impressed by the simplicity and profundity of his thoughts the vivid manner in which he treated this subject, so full of anguish. . . . Please find enclosed a few lines for him.

"Greetings to our friends. May God preserve them from all dangers. I think every day of those who endure so much suffering in London. When will the end come to all this misfortune?

"Even if peace comes soon I would first have to replace all the hospital staff and initiate the newcomers before there would be any likelihood of my being able to go on furlough. If only there were still fairies who could rejuvenate people by some simple magic! Just think if all of a sudden I could find myself in full possession of the strength which I had when I was thirty, which would enable me to cope with the work that lies ahead and with the hope that I could continue to direct the hospital for many long years to come." *

The long duration of World War II extended far beyond the length of safety his latest term of residence in tropical Africa. Happily, after a time of illness years ago, Madame Schweitzer was able to rejoin him. It is remarkable that in his seventies he was able to put in a full day's work at the hospital: usually he was first to rise in the morning, last to go to bed at night. Now that his retirement is announced, if he keeps to it, the second act in the drama of his life comes to its curtain. In great literature the surprise and the best is often the third act.

Years ago it was proposed to Mr. Fletcher, a keen member of the English Schweitzer Council, that it

* *City Temple Tidings*, 1945, p. 97.

would be good if the doctor would attend an International Conference for Youth that young people might meet him personally. "If you can get him from his hospital," was the reply. The older man knew Schweitzer. Further talk brought out the sentence, "He hopes to celebrate his seventieth birthday there."

That seemed a long time ahead, twenty years ago. That a man aged fifty-five could still be working in Africa at seventy-three appeared out of the question. The conference was never arranged. Doctor Schweitzer had greater work to do. God's Eager Fool has justified his folly when he renounced music, learning and independence, that he might serve Lazarus, stricken sore, and untended.

The consecutive story of his thirty-five years of work in Africa can only be properly told by one of the staff at Lambaréné. His love of and care for animals, the many stories that reveal the man—these all await the biographer who has intimate knowledge of Lambaréné, unless we get more from Schweitzer himself. But we wait for so much from him: the completion of the *History of the Early Church*, and the completion of his *Civilization and Ethics*; to continue, in peace and work, in toil and pain, his hospital work he considered a greater service. That he will still find practical ways of serving men we can be sure, even if he is retired from Lambaréné. Will he, at age eighty-five, like Robert Bridges, produce a rich and mellow masterpiece, his vision of The Christ?

An important reason would justify his life story from others. They could tell the little tales that make a man so likeable but that the doctor could not relate about himself. Without being inquisitive many are eager to hear as much as possible. He is in all things so normal, albeit on a high level, that few stories circulate. Happily married, one daughter, three grandchildren, everything about him is normal and worthy.

Two Americans, after a month at the hospital in 1947, have published a fascinating insight into the daily life of the hospital: its photographs are a delight. The four large-scale biographies, including this one, all lack the authentic touch. Ten pages from any context and the informed can always spot the Schweitzer text. Happily goodness is infectious but genius never is.

His letters would bring us nearer to the man: but the family letters may never be published. Yet even his letters answering correspondents, if assembled, would show the richness and the gentleness of his mind. Their neat, tiny script is impressive. How often in them the heart of Schweitzer reveals his concern for the Negro!

The letter to Rev. Dr. Spinks reproduced below, is the type of letter received by many contributors, often written in great weariness. They are, in our generation, what the letters of George Muller were in an earlier time. They illustrate the triumph of faith at the moment of great need. Dr. Schweitzer—true to his character and approach to life—observes a severe restraint in the use of words concerning an answer to a prayer. His experience is the same as Muller's: needed money comes almost at the last moment that endurance can wait. If ever this side of the work is documented it may well become the classical illustration of the life of faith in our generation.

“I wish to thank you for the very much valued gift which you sent to my hospital, via Mr. Williams. Mr. Williams also conveyed to me the very pleasing note which accompanied your gift. In my great weariness I am constantly sustained by the many signs of good will I receive from all directions. I am deeply moved by the loyal and devoted support of my English friends. Without their help I should not have been able to maintain my hospital during the war years. The generous gift on the occasion of my 70th birthday comes

as an unlooked-for help at a most opportune moment. I had then to repatriate to Europe two nurses whose health had suffered through hard work and the unhealthy climate; this gift will assist in making their voyage possible. It has also enabled me to buy some rice, as I wrote a few days ago in my letter to the Bishop of Chichester."

Money for the hospital comes from all possible sources. Congregationalists, Unitarians, Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists, all join in sending contributions. A recent tribute to God's Eager Fool was by a Roman Catholic. All countries help, especially all western European countries. America too sends to Lambaréné. All Christian communities, all peoples, send their gifts.

We give here, in the original wording, another letter to the Rev. Dr. Spinks from a nurse at Lambaréné, that tells its own story. If only a Holman Hunt would paint the Doctor, looking in on each patient on his good night round of the hospital.

"Doctor Schweitzer has a good deal of sense of humour and there momentary he suffers from writing-crampe in his hand, and because you so kindly wish to spare him to write to you again, the Doctor asks me (I am a nurse working for the Lambaréné Hospital since 20 years) to answer your lines. Your so friendly letter via Me. Williams greatly moved the Doctor and we all thank you for your will to help in a time difficult for you and your country too.

"During all the years of war we had the almost immeasurable favour to keep hospital work running. If the trying equatorial climate and the African prose of daily service threatened to discourage us, our thoughts went northwards where mankind suffered terrible destruction and death. We could not but be thankful for being here; nursing, healing, helping, moreover what a chance that Doctor Schweitzer was among us. I never admired him more than in these last years. He gave us

the example of joyful courage and of a high conception of duty. He begins the day together with us all and when we stop with the falling night, he continues with correspondence or philosophy or Bach music and seldom are the nights, when he does not go for a last round (about midnight) to see the patients giving trouble. Last week being worn out the Doctor could'nt go for the last round. Next morning early he went to see the patients. One of them said: Doctor, why did'nt you come last night to say ' Goodnight ' to me? I could'nt sleep for that I was waiting for you all the time. This primitif man's words show the seriously ill people are accustomed to see the Doctor coming in the night to look for them.

"With thankfulness for your kindness and your precious help."

Our last word concerning the hospital is from a private letter, a slightly earlier period.

"I am just putting the finishing touches to the third volume of my Philosophy. But for the war I should have achieved this long ago. . . . This third volume is to be an exposition of the philosophy of Reverence towards Life which would be universally understood. All my thoughts have been centred on this work, for it would bring my life's work to its conclusion.

"Every evening when I am not too tired I practise the organ on the piano with organ pedals which the Bach Society in Paris gave me as a present, and while practising I forget my weariness. . . . Apart from the medical work there are so many things to be done. I have to erect walls to preserve the river banks and demarcate the roads. There are buildings to be seen to and lamps to be repaired . . . so many little jobs of which there is no end. That is the difficulty in this land, where there is no skilled labour; you have to do everything yourself. But how happy I am that at my age and in spite of a long stay in this bad tropical

climate I still have the strength to do my share of the work.

“ I wish I could have many more years of toil for the sake of the hospital. But I consider myself lucky that I have found throughout the years such efficient and faithful helpers. There are European nurses in my team who have been working here for more than twenty years. . . . ”

His comment on the close of the war is typical of his scholarship. It is in the spirit of the Grecian play *The Persians*, when a poet, the member of a victor people, expresses sorrow for the defeated rather than joy in triumph.

“ The news of the end of the war in Europe we received on Monday, May 7th, 1945, at midday. While I was sitting at my writing table after dinner finishing urgent letters which had to reach the river steamer by 2 o'clock, there appeared at my window a white patient who had brought his radio set with him to the hospital. He shouted to me that according to a German report relayed from the radio station at Leopoldville in the Belgian Congo, an armistice had been concluded in Europe on land and on sea. But I had to go on sitting at my table in order to finish the letters which must be sent off immediately. Then I had to go down to the hospital where the heart cases and other patients have appointments for treatment at 2 o'clock. In the course of the afternoon the big bell was rung and when the people at the hospital had gathered, they were told that the war in Europe was over. After that, in spite of my great fatigue, I had to drag myself into the plantation to see how the work was getting on there.

“ Only when evening came, could I begin to think and try to imagine the meaning of the end of hostilities and what the innumerable people must be feeling who were experiencing the first night for years without threat of bombardment. Whilst outside in the darkness the

palms were gently rustling, I fetched from its shelf the little book with the sayings of Lao-tse, the great Chinese thinker of the 6th century B.C., and read his impressive words on war and victory.

‘Weapons are disastrous implements, no tools for a noble being.

Only when he can do no otherwise, does he make use of them. . . .

He conquers, but he knows no joy in this.

He who would rejoice in victory, would be rejoicing in murder. . . .

At the victory celebration, the general should take his place as is the custom at funeral ceremonies. The slaughter of human beings in great numbers should be lamented with tears of compassion. Therefore should he who has conquered in battle bear himself as if he were at a festival of mourning.’ ” *

Europe and the Negro

Having sketched the story of his hospital work, it is relevant to give his views concerning the relationship of white and black. The Schweitzer and the Mussolini attitude stand opposed; the one would approach the Negro as his little brother, impelled to service by responsibility, moved by a conscience that the European owes to the Negro a compensation for the wrongs he has had to suffer, the other regards the Negro as a savage, impelled to conquest by the colonization need of a growing home population.

Yet, as in all else, Schweitzer is no sentimentalist. Fully aware of the defects in the Negro character, he seeks to understand and accordingly to determine his relationship. The notorious laziness of the primitive Negro in the plantations and wood industry is shown in his writings to result from the fact that the Negro is a

* *British Bulletin*, No. 18.

child of nature who will only work hard when he feels that the immediate compulsion of hunger is behind him, for to this only he has been accustomed. His banana and manioc digging when at home in his village is hard work which the Negro will not shirk, but why do more than necessary? Especially so when nature is so generous. But colonization demands continuous labour, often on tinned food and rice. This is not natural and the Negro acts as a child, gets out of the situation as easily as possible.

Their lack of a sense of responsibility (the whole of his buildings were once endangered by a man who wanted to spare himself a walk of twenty yards), their tendency to thief, their unpleasant habits, are all acknowledged, and full sympathy is expressed for the traders who must deal with this day by day. He has no Swanee picture of the Negroes as All God's Chill'un; rather, he knows them as sympathetic residents find them, artless children of nature lost in the strange new world of factories, time-sheets, taxes, bank notes, clocks and police courts, which colonization has forced upon them. They have had to pay an exorbitant price for what amenities civilization has to offer.

There is a real conflict between sympathy and colonization; the latter must go on because the life of Europe depends upon it, but one can try to infuse into ordinary business practice what sympathy is possible. Not many, like Schweitzer, are privileged to represent altogether the higher principle. He urges that colonization should be subservient to preserving the native population, should strive to preserve the village life of the worker, taking him from his home surroundings as little as possible, for much more quickly than the white, in such circumstances, the Negro degenerates, falling victim to drink and other vices. It is pathetic the way they waste their money; their devotion to western fashion is ridiculous.

This urge to copy the west leads Schweitzer to deprecate educating any single Negro too far beyond his people; a sane view that ought to be given heed to. Education should teach practical crafts to all the men, and a slight literary education to a few so that the whole community can advance together in civilization.

Concerning native moral practices he is sane, not desiring that the Christian ideals of marriage should be too suddenly thrust upon a primitive people to the upsetting of all their native codes of family responsibility. Even polygamy has its advantages in a simple community, it cares for the widow and the orphan. At a conference a missionary was earnestly asking that all converts be required to give up the pleasures of polygamy; Schweitzer quietly asked: "But, brother, do you think it is a pleasure to have three or four wives?"

On the relation of civilized and primitive he is practical, sympathetic. Seldom is any good purpose served by going native; retain and preserve the superiority of the educated man, but always regard the native as "little brother." This, no doubt, is an interim attitude till such time as they share with us full stature and equal civilization, but for the present it is a counsel of Christian wisdom aware of the real situation. Compensation by the white for earlier wrongs he has inflicted, limitless responsibility from the privileged, is a motive of which he is wilderness prophet and suffering servant.

Youth's Hero

This has not been a cold study; a claim has been advanced he would *never* countenance. He would brush aside our appreciation. "One day, in my despair at some of them who had once more been drawing polluted water, I threw myself into a chair in the consulting room and groaned out: 'What a blockhead I was to come out here to doctor savages like these!' Whereupon Joseph quietly remarked: 'Yes, Doctor, here on earth

you are a great blockhead, but not in heaven.' He likes giving utterance to sententious remarks like that. I wish he would support us better in our efforts to hinder the spread of dysentery." *

A curious comment upon him must be noted. It is said he is too perfect. Having ourselves a sister as near perfect as may be, we have never felt the modern need to know something nasty to believe in the human in a good person. The scribblers who show the Victorian giants as four feet high merely prove that dwarfs would draw even Lincoln as a dwarf. If it is odd it is true, Schweitzer is a good man. We believe there are a great number. That Madame Schweitzer knows his faults we realize. That he is impatient we know. He was at times a naughty boy we know, not a choir-boy all the time. We saw the dark place where father set schoolboy exuberance.

Whatever are his gross sins in the sight of The Eternal we neither know, nor wish to know. Yet we must say this. Over twenty years of enquiry, in many quarters, we have heard only compliments. Let Mrs. Meynell speak: "The first time he held my hand and looked at me I felt a power of goodness running into me like an electric current. I have never, before or since, felt anything quite like it." †

What chief impression of character should close our study? The unconscious self-revelation as he writes of Bach will permit us to break through his accustomed reserve. "His modesty was not the hypocritical and conceited thing in which celebrities often love to drape themselves in order to bulk still larger in the eyes of the world, but the sane and healthy modesty that comes from the simple consciousness of one's own worth." ‡

Young people are deeply influenced by him. There is reason for this. If even an unknown student writes to

* *M.P.F.* 102. † *Theistic Calendar*, July 1948.

‡ *J. S. Bach*, I. 152.

him, one letter in a heavy mail, he will reply personally, and give of his time, for no other cause than that the student is keen—and youthful. This is personal testimony of the present writer but it could be repeated from Oxford, Edinburgh, Cologne, or Paris.

At a reception, always he moves quietly to where the young people are. "Schweitzer showed no interest in the dignitaries. He was carrying on an animated conversation with the women whom he had known during his pastorate in a little Alsatian town. I was impressed by this friendly interest of an internationally famous musician in the small affairs of humble people."*

Written of him concerning a lecture in Munich, almost the same words were used by an Oxford professor: the young people there had been thrilled, more . . . inspired. If anyone, going to Lambaréné, will call first at Gunsbach or Strassburg they will be deeply impressed by the number of people who will send their personal greetings and little gifts of affection to the Herr Doctor. He is still one of themselves; fame has not removed him from their circle of intimates.

The tribute by Dr. Micklem is typical. "We welcomed Dr. Schweitzer on his brief visit to the Selly Oak Colleges with interest and enthusiasm, qualified by awe and anxiety: for being a young institution we have not yet learned how to receive the great as though we were accustomed to their company and proof against it. But as our reverence increased, we soon forgot all our anxiety."†

One could assemble a file of such tributes. There are few other records of a man so gifted, who could have commanded limousine, luxury, and college comforts, travelling Europe, third class, dressed in a well-worn mantle and a rather old suit, rejoicing in good recital fees because that meant medicine for the Negroes.

Always he is courteous, considerate, gracious. But he can be an exacting taskmaster: "My young coun-

* Private letter. .

† C.R.W., p. 8.

tryman, who does not know yet what fatigue is, signals to me from the deck: 'now you shall rest, and I will take over all your work' are his words when we shake hands. 'Good,' I answer, 'then begin at once, and look after the lading of the canoe with your trunks and cases.' " * To speak with those who have been with him in his hospital is to know how willingly they rendered service. His command is always "follow me."

From his boyhood when he gazed on the statue of the Negro at Colmar, so broad-chested, so pensive, till his return to Europe in 1948, one thought has been in his mind: that we know God as Love in man, as Mystery in nature. Wordsworth records that, when a boy, a blind beggar took cosmic significance. "The label seemed apt type of the utmost we can know, both of ourselves and of the universe." † In like manner the Negro statue became a symbol of the utmost Schweitzer could know; that he must give his life in sincere devotion. We cannot know beyond this.

Convinced that "our civilization is going through a severe crisis," keenly aware "that the world is inexplicably mysterious and full of suffering," Schweitzer draws strength and courage from nature.

if, in this time
Of dereliction and dismay, I yet
Despair not of our nature, but retain
A more than Roman confidence, a faith
That fails not, in all sorrow my support,
The blessing of my life—the gift is yours,
Ye winds and sounding cataracts! 'tis yours,
Ye mountains! thine, O Nature! Thou hast fed
My lofty speculations; and in thee,
For this uneasy heart of ours, I find
A never-failing principle of joy
And purest passion.‡

* *M.P.F.*, 41.

† *Prelude*, Book 7.

‡ *ibid.*, Book 2.

MUSIC AND THE ORGAN

Bach as a Terminal Figure

IF a student of the Royal College of Organists would now meet J. S. Bach he must be introduced by Albert Schweitzer, who has so informed himself concerning Bach, has so penetrated the literature, that he is Bach. "If you disagree with Schweitzer you disagree with Bach." * To learn how Bach's melodies play hide and seek through the harmony, how he gives music to the soul of the verbal passage, how he is the extreme of pictorial music, this will grip the mind, fire the imagination, as Schweitzer explains. But sit with him on the organ bank, watch his selfless attitude, listen to the superb playing of transcendent music, suddenly the miracle happens—Bach is there, himself, the immortal J. S. Bach.

Why was Schweitzer drawn to Bach? His father did not love this music; his early tutor was not especially disposed; only his own nature found instant and deep satisfaction in Bach's work. He might have given his time to Handel, Mozart, Beethoven. Why did Bach fascinate? That Bach is deeply religious quickly explains. In so far as it is right to distinguish religion from philosophy or aesthetics, often as they interpenetrate, it is the essential understanding of Schweitzer—he is a religious man.

If religion is necessity rather than curiosity, anguish not sympathy, prayer not laughter, Schweitzer is a religious man. If religion is an awareness of suffering

* *Jubilee Book*, p. 210.

more than an appreciation of joy, responsibility more than leisured grace, a desire to be one with The Eternal more than a tense grasp on the passing years, Schweitzer is a religious man. All this is in Bach. He is its voice in the eighteenth as Schweitzer is its voice in the twentieth century.

Western civilization is deeply religious, as the history and development of European art makes clear. From the early to the full Gothic, architecture expressed the religious longing. This was succeeded by painting, and from Fra Angelico to Raphael the artist served as chief interpreter. In time this gave place to music, and from Schutz to Bach the musician served as truest interpreter of the religious feeling native to European peoples. Dominating this, Christian religion reigns as Queen of the Arts, the ecstasy that she communicates the noblest known to man. All worthy experience deepens into religion.

Architecture moves toward the sublime, from the simple Norman arch to the soaring vertical line that triumphs in Salisbury Cathedral. Painting moves inward from the maiden's beauty that is Botticelli to the old man's wisdom that is Rembrandt. Music, our longing to be as the universal, culminates in Bach. Even in the development of single composers there is a movement from the vivace to the pianissimo, from the aesthetic to the religious. Mozart with his Requiem, Beethoven with his Mass in D, Wagner with his Parsifal, all enter the realm where Bach is the elder son.

As a medium through whom the religious longings find perfect expression, Bach is finely sensitive. He is, if not the end, the significant figure in a long progressive development. Not only is he the climax of the arts, he is the terminal point of the fugue, choral prelude and cantata; in him they are perfected and given eternal life. At the significant moment, when music is about to break from the church and be

secularized, Bach appears, to comprehend in his art all the striving and stress of human aspiration and sorrow.

As da Vinci preceded Titian, so Bach preceded Mozart. Before the creative urge passed to secular mastery of the physical, Bach gave immortality to the religious longing. Before the Hebrew yielded to the Greek, before the sense of the immortal gave place to appreciation of the transient, in that time of passing Bach appeared. "We halt in veneration before the grandeur."

With learning, conviction, and illustration, Schweitzer proves that Bach marks the end of an epoch. He shows how Bach, by infusing his music with his own religious spirit, gave immortality to the cantata and chorale, at the time when the creative urge was moving to the secular. Bach preserved all that was noblest in the old form: the longing of medieval piety to be freed from this body of death; the sense of far kingdoms beyond present horizons; "the glimpse of an everlasting light above the howling senses' ebb and flow"; all these found last and final expression.

Schweitzer himself marks the end of an epoch. The development of science has brought us to a remarkable age. As architecture, painting, and music broke from religious domination, with no loss to religion, but with a great gain to art, so now morality breaks from the threat and sanction of the unseen with no loss to piety, but a great gain to altruistic motive. Schweitzer comprehends in himself our sense of mystery, our demand that men serve God, in spirit of pure adoration, uninfluenced by fear of punishment or hope of reward. At every turning point in history there is a figure who, fulfilment of the past, is an inspiration to the future: as Bach was, Schweitzer is.

The Organist

From playing the organ in the village church, when only nine years old, to international artist, is a long way; it is a hard way. The record of his slow, persistent rise to fame must wait until his early years are fully chronicled; we can only briefly relate the story of his success. His music, like his work in theology, is a family passion. He gives a quiet picture of his father extemporizing on the piano as he, the boy, sat listening in a corner of the slowly darkening room, deeply moved. Though in every gifted child there is a rich endowment, without which the rise to supremacy is not possible, it must be stressed that hard work has given to Schweitzer his station.

"My music master used to say, 'Albert Schweitzer is my thorn in the flesh.' "* This was due to faulty early training. A taunting criticism from the master once sent the boy home determined to show that he could play. He practised until he found the right fingering, wrote it above the score, then practised till he was perfect. When the day for playing came, his master said nothing, but gave him a piece of Beethoven and afterwards Bach. This story is characteristic of the student who played two fingerings with different masters, taking the best from both.

During college life he continued his music. Of the hard study given to Bach before he went to Paris on his travelling scholarship there is no record; it is only possible to guess. When the leading Paris organist, C. M. Widor, writes that a student of twenty-three revealed to him a Bach of whose existence he had previously had only the dimmest suspicion, it is striking testimony not only to the powers of the student, but to the work that student had put in at private study. While appreciative of his gifts as a player, it was his

* *C. & T.*, p. 56.

mastery from memory of the Bach Chorales and the poems they illustrated that so impressed Widor that he urged Schweitzer to write the exposition which has revealed the secret of Bach not only to the French but to the German and English speaking world.

Typical of his genius, his musical enlightenment was evident while he was yet a young man. The insight which he, the student, gave to Widor, the experienced organist, is contained in his *J. S. Bach*. The book is elaborate, but the heart of the enlightenment came to him as a young man. In his conception of the dynamic Jesus, the student, in a flash of artistic insight, penetrated the truth of the matter; so also in music. He passed from his student days in full possession of exceptional powers.

At age twenty-eight he was appointed organist to the Bach Society of Paris, evidence of ability and reputation. Before he left for Africa the capital cities of Europe were open to him as a recitalist. The spirit of his organ-playing is, even when playing in a concert hall, by reason of the chosen programme and the spirit of the rendering, to transform the hall into a cathedral, that the listeners become worshippers. He would lead them to The Eternal.

If he enters the ministry as against other professions because it gives religion to the people, he loves the organ more than other instruments because its swelling floods express the fullness and its deep notes tell the mystery of nature. The organ has a majesty not shared by the piano. Not merely the lesser volume of sound is reason for the piano being little used in worship: not because the organ fills the building is it found in church.

The organ speaks as Isaiah and Jeremiah heard the Voice of the Lord: the piano is the echo of the oracle at Delphos. In the organ is the sound of the waters of Babylon and weeping: in the piano is the sharp note of

Greek chisels striking the Parthenon frieze: in the organ is a righteous God and a silent worshipper, in the piano a dance of laughing men and fair women. Always Schweitzer is for conscience, of the Puritans a Puritan: his ethic seeks to create a conscience where before no twinge was felt. The organ is his instrument, Bach his inspiration.

An astonishing story comes from his war internment. While in Africa he had been able to keep in practice upon the piano with organ pedals presented to him by the Bach Society of Paris; during 1918 in Southern France he did not have this, so he played upon a table; an organist who can so dominate the environment is no ordinary musician. After the war was over, when he was released, he returned to the organ and, happily, his art not lost to him, again he was acclaimed an international artist.

The published works which give him eminence are: *J. S. Bach*, a book of over nine hundred pages; and, in co-operation with C. M. Widor, *The Organ Works of Bach*, in five volumes. Two other small, but important, books are *Organ Building and Organ Playing in Germany and France*, and *International Regulations for Organ Building*. The latter is significant because his recommendations were endorsed by the Congress of the International Musical Society held in Vienna in 1909. Although an organist, he knows his instrument as a builder.

The Organ Builder

The two small books on organ construction are a guide to the organ-building industry, with advice to buyers. To church vestries he would advise, do not try to get most value for money, but see carefully to it that wind chest and pipes are right: do not be attracted merely to a large number of stops.

His criterion of a good organ is tone; it is better to

have a few stops and pleasing tone than a hundred with a blare of sound. He warns: be sure that the old organ is really worthless, be certain it should be replaced, be cautious in ordering a new instrument. Not size, but the quality of tone and the position of the organ in the building is the essential thing. Do not enclose your organ in a corner. This interest in organ building has given him a great deal of work, most of it voluntary. His anxiety to save certain old organs has demanded much time before church committees. All is worth while: ". . . the struggle for the good organ is part of the struggle for truth." *

Within the previous paragraph is a career for most men. We have omitted entirely his technical suggestions bringing together the best in French and German styles in organ building. We give instead one story. In Holland he was rehearsing for a recital. He did not come for lunch: his host looked for him but he was not in the church. He did not come for tea. Later he turned up. He had been inside the organ all day cleaning it so as to get best results. His ability to go long stretches without food or drink outlasted all his attendants in his early years. One by one they went off, at his suggestion, to get a bite of something.

Writer on Music

The edition of Bach's organ works, edited in five volumes by Widor and Schweitzer, gives the master's score without interpretation. An analysis of each piece is given in preface, but no markings are printed with the score itself. Schweitzer requires each organist to work out his own fingering and interpretation; if marked it will accustom the organist to thoughtless methods.

The student who read the whole of Kant, who read all previous books on the historical Jesus, is the musician who insists that every organist discover his own finger-

* *L. & T.*, p. 101.

ing; after he has thus studied, his understanding deepens. There is to be no sparing of labour. His own practice is similarly thorough. Before every recital he demands of himself eight hours' rehearsal: the particular organ must be his obedient instrument.

In the preface to the five volumes, general observations on the interpretation of the Prelude and Fugues, written by Schweitzer, open with consideration of the tempo in which Bach played his works. The conclusion is that the tempo of the eighteenth century was not as subject to extremes as our rendering. "Their vivace corresponded to a lively moderato." Essentially German in his feeling, Schweitzer emphasizes *adagio*.

Organists should remember that the work, though familiar to them, will be strange to the listener, to which must be added the difficulty for the listener to distinguish the several melodies. The slower the rendering the easier it is for the untrained ear to appreciate the structure of a fugue, hearing when each entrance of the theme is announced, responding to every variation. If architecture is frozen music, the eye able to observe that in Salisbury Cathedral all unbroken lines flow upward to the spire, music as flowing architecture must not be speeded, else detail is lost.

Certain critics think that Africa has deprived Schweitzer of finger elasticity: they mistake his slow rendering: what is intention and interpretation they deem to be stiffness. He advises organists to listen in the nave to their own metronomic rate, played by another organist. Remembering that the listening worshipper—to Schweitzer the organ is a sacred instrument—is not familiar with the piece, it should be rendered just a little slower than the tempo which allows the organist to discern its full structure.

The slow rendering is justified by detailed references to the organs of the eighteenth century, especially the Silbermann organs. Their technical possibilities are

examined to establish his rightness. As he establishes the dynamic Jesus by the appeal to history, concerning the tempo of a Bach work he follows like method. On his way to Europe in 1948 he played in Lagos Cathedral. A native organist complimented him but added "But I can play quicker than you can." He tells this story with great glee.

His advice is "Back to Simplicity." It is wrong to attempt to make popular the master's work through eccentricity and tricks of virtuosity. The player must always be subordinate to the composer. Let Shakespeare and Schweitzer speak together. "Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you," becomes "Play the music as it is written." "But if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town crier spoke my lines," becomes "Some organists actually sacrifice the fugue and the theme: while this was proceeding those who knew the fugue were writhing in torture."

"In the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness," becomes "Only when self observation is well developed, when the fingers are controlled by the ear, and concentration never relaxes for an instant, can a plastic and impressive interpretation be achieved." "It offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters . . . pray you avoid it," becomes "Some players make an exaggerated use of the couplers of pedals to manuals. In Bach's polyphony not the loudness of the bass, but its distinctness, comes in question."

Not only with Preludes and Fugues but in the rendering of the orchestral works the end must be simplicity. Better ten voices and purity than a hundred voices with merely volume of sound. He protests against the massed choirs, necessary perhaps in large halls, but even there

usually too large. It is not in the spirit of the master. In some renderings the louder choruses break upon the cowering audience with the fury of a thunderclap. No, a quiet sensitive rendering with a few voices suited to the hall is the true manner.

To the conductor, as to the organist, Schweitzer would say, "The Preludes and the Fugues of the Master of St. Thomas' reveal the realm of the sublime. This signifies that he who presides at the instrument must approach his task with a sanctified emotion, with something of a prophet's humility and consecration of spirit. If he has not penetrated to this arcana, though his performance have the polish of perfection, that which lies in and beyond the tones will not be kindled to life. To himself, and to others, his playing of Bach will be only a deception. As to all things that spring from the truth, the words of Scripture apply to the Preludes and the Fugues of the master, 'The Spirit giveth Life.'"

The book *J. S. Bach* is the leading exposition of the master. Schweitzer wrote it urged by Widor to fill a blank in French musical literature. First published in Paris, it is a testimony to his mastery of languages that he wrote in French. At once recognized as a serious contribution, he was commissioned to prepare a German translation, but he chose instead to rewrite the work and expanded it greatly.

A surprising feature is that a non-musical reader can thoroughly enjoy it. The clear tracing of how several streams converge in Bach, the historical setting, the story of his life, the oblivion that fell upon his work and its slow resurrection to immortality, the analysis of the pieces, the theory of the aesthetic, the contention that Bach is a pictorial musician, are all subjects that any ordinary reader can enjoy. He has written the unusual, a book that appeals to the trained musician yet fascinates the lay reader. There is need for a shortened

version to speed its reaching a wider public. As a preacher, Schweitzer commands the rare gift of holding the university audience, while at the same time he is so simple the townsfolk can understand.

The book opens with an enquiry into the roots of Bach's art. He is portrayed as an objective artist. To maintain this leads to a fascinating contrast between subjective and objective artists. The art of the former has its source in their personalities, whereas "Bach belongs to the order of objective artists. These are wholly of their own time, and work only with the forms and the ideas that their time proffers them. They exercise no criticism upon the media of artistic expression that they find lying ready to their hand, and feel no inner compulsion to open out new paths. Their art not coming solely from the stimulus of their outer experience, we need not seek the roots of their work in the fortunes of its creator." *

Musical Historian

This throws a light upon Schweitzer's theology, for the children of his mind have all a strong family resemblance. Jesus is the objective artist, one who accepted the form and thought of his time, one whose art and teaching were not affected by the fortunes of his life, one in whom the noblest spirit of the time attained to clear expression. Paul is the subjective artist, the source of whose art and teaching is in his own personality. A law unto himself, he placed himself contrary to the thought of his time and originated a new dogmatic form to contain his idea.

As biographer, Schweitzer is quiet, clear and scholarly. The facts as available are known to him. The Bach family over four generations is brought before us; then the life story of John Sebastian Bach is told. In his triumphs when obtaining a more lucrative post, his

* *J.S.B.*, v. 1, p. 1.

conflicts with councils and his inability to maintain discipline, before the court and at the organ, as father and as brother artist, as organist and as composer, as industrious conscientious worker sitting frequently at his desk till far into the morning, as worried father complaining of the scarcity of funerals with music, in every possible relationship Bach is presented as a man among men, an artist of the artists.

One most interesting section is that in which he hazards a guess as to Bach's method of working. If Giotto could draw the perfect circle in one sweep of the hand could Bach write the perfect theme in one inspired moment? Evidence does not exist, nevertheless Schweitzer's conclusion is significant. "Everything points to the fact that Bach did not invent easily, but slowly and with difficulty. We must not be misled by the fact that we possess hardly any sketches or drafts of his, and that the scores of his cantatas give the impression of having been thrown off in one breath, so quickly in fact that the flying pen could scarcely keep pace with the ideas. . . . We can form only a faint idea of the long and arduous mental work. . . ." *

First and foremost a historian in his approach to the study of the sources and form of Bach's art, Schweitzer traces the development of the hymn book. To the fact that Luther was a writer who gave to the hymn a leading place in congregational worship is due the Bach Chorales. A detailed study of the type of tunes, to what degree sung by congregation or choir, the rise and progress of congregational singing, all are passed in review in order that the Chorale as given life by Bach may be rightly understood. Passion music from the ninth century, the German opera and religious music, and numerous other topics are considered: all earlier music leads to, is consummated in Bach.

Schweitzer's mastery of history is put to varied service.

* *J.S.B.*, v. 1, p. 211.

He traces the slow resurrection from oblivion of the master's works during the nineteenth century and then shows, once this revival is sure, in what way his spirit influences later music. He tells of the several instruments at the time of Bach: shows in what way the *oboe d'amore*, first brought into use at this time, appealed to Bach, analyzes the fingering of the master, assures us that Bach had the power of improvising for two hours, while keeping to one theme, informs us that he was calm, that his hands moved very little during performance, that finger mastery explains his triumph. This is also so with Schweitzer at the organ. The quiet method is his practice as a lecturer: he stands almost statuesque for one hour, refers to no notes, yet holds his audience in rapt attention.

Theory of the Aesthetic

Relevant to his exposition, yet lending itself to consideration as a separate piece of writing, is chapter twenty of *J. S. Bach*, in which he analyzes the nature and content of aesthetic experience. If ever the promise of this chapter should be realized in a treatise, his ethical theory alone excepted, it should be the finest of his works. This chapter is as the Three Reverences are in *Wilhelm Meister*, a part of the whole, yet in certain respects greater than the whole. If Goethe had elaborated his Three Reverences we should have had a considered exposition of his sense of our relationship to man, nature and God, a teaching which would have given to us as a sheaf what we glean with difficulty from his works. If Schweitzer had elaborated this theory of the aesthetic he would have had to make clear his teaching concerning the unseen, whether religious or other genius is influenced by the invisible, whether human life is subject to angelic influences.

Other themes implicit in the chapter would take us far. The writing shows that if he had given himself to

art criticism he would have become the Ruskin of German literature. Like one of his masters, Nietzsche, he writes a prose rich in beautiful simplicity, profound in significance, which stimulates the reader to such original thought that he believes himself, until he attempts to write it out, a clever person. This provocative writing is rare and is to be treasured.

What is his aesthetic theory? He seeks to demonstrate that behind the variety of artistic expression is a single experience. Even as the believer, through Jesus, Confucius, Mohammed, Buddha, enters into The Eternal, so through music, painting, sculpture, the artist enters into the sphere of perfect forms. This Platonic language Schweitzer does not use, although the idea is implicit in his work. If he does not concern himself with the nature of the source, he does clearly emphasize that whatever the creative ecstasy which inspires the artist, it is personal accident which leads Goethe to poetry, Gainsborough to painting, Sir Walter Scott to fiction, Kant to philosophy. Goethe might have been a painter, Gainsborough a landscape gardener, Scott a poet, Kant an architect. All inspiration is one.

If Goethe's poetry and prose is a gallery of pictures, Rembrandt's works are colour fugues. A true understanding of any one art is only realized when it is observed how much of the sister arts is within its products. It is delightful at the concert hall to see a panorama of such scenes historical and natural that Hollywood is outmoded: it is even more delightful at the National Gallery to hear such operas as not even Wagner could write, to listen—but how surprised the attendants would be if this silent music became sound. "Painting is suffused with poetry, and poetry with painting." *

In the course of his argument Schweitzer cites these

* *J.S.B.*, v. 2, p. 11.

illustrations. Heine and Wagner can be seen as painters, Schiller and Nietzsche can be heard as musicians. "Just as there are painters and musicians among the poets, so there are poets and painters among the musicians. They become clearly distinguished from each other in proportion as the 'other artist' is able to assert himself in their conceptions. Poetic music deals more with ideas, pictorial music with pictures. The one appeals more to feeling, the other to the mind's eye." *

"Beethoven and Wagner belong more to the poets, Bach, Schubert and Berlioz more to the painters." † He concludes: "Art in itself is neither painting nor poetry nor music, but an act of creation, in which all three co-operate." ‡ If creation combines all three, the medium only determining the mode of expression, our reception of, and response to art is likewise a mingling of all three in our appreciation, whatever the art that makes the immediate appeal.

This chapter justifies what Widor wrote, "To read *Bach* is not only to get to know the composer and his work, but to penetrate also to the essence of music in general." § Not only the interrelatedness of the four arts, Poetry, Architecture, Painting, Music, the manner of their expression comes under consideration. Schweitzer's study of their varying dialects and differing manner of speech, having always in mind that a common language unites them, tends to show, with no disparagement of the others, that music is the aristocrat. From his exposition that in the artist's primary experience all arts are one, though a specific form leads to the expression of the same, to his conclusion, that in our appreciation of art we move through the specific art which stimulates our interest to share the primary experience, he passes to consider an equally fascinating theory, that "reticence" marks the true art.

* *J.S.B.*, v. 2, p. 21.

† *ibid.*, p. 13.

‡ *loc. cit.*

§ *ibid.*, v. 1, p. x.

An easy transition in his book leads to his emphasis that what art communicates is its own witness, beyond speech. Art expression is not adequate to exhaust what it represents; indeed the truer the art, the less is it exhaustive, the greater is the "reticence" which it must observe; the more suggestiveness is implicit within its product, the less is it explicit. "In truth," says Wagner, "the greatness of the poet can be best measured by what he refrains from saying, in order to let the inexpressible itself speak to us in secrecy." *

Bearing this in mind he passes in review poetry, painting, music, to urge that in each art, in the order mentioned, there is a deepening suggestiveness; a greater reticence is observed in expressing the magnificence of the felt experience. Not only is there a greater reticence in music than in architecture, wherefore music is the more adequate art, even in music itself the more reticent the composer the greater is his work.

Reticence as a measure of profundity, central thought in his theory of the aesthetic, insistence that not he who tells all, but he who suggests most, is the greater artist; not the Egyptian Temple but the Gothic Cathedral, not Rubens but Rembrandt, not Buxtehude but Bach; this understanding of reticence is to be kept in mind when we approach the ethic of reverence for life, for music and theology are one in his mind. The usual promises attached to ethics are explicit: immortal life or re-incarnation, reward or punishment, the God of Love greater than natural forces, all so explicit: it is otherwise with the ethic of reverence for life which, preserving reticence, is so much the more profound, leaving, as does all great art, so much the more to the imagination.

Having established "that in music the expression is wholly symbolical" † where in other arts it is to certain degree concrete, that in music more reticence is observed

* *J.S.B.*, v. 2, p. 16.

† *loc. cit.*

in expressing the felt experience than is true of other arts, Schweitzer defends in music that which must be heard several times before it is understood. Music is a foreign language: there are within it tones and combinations signifying nothing to the uninitiated. Though this is conceded, it is immediately argued that music frequently, if not perhaps always, is more illustrative of a picture, an incident, a mood, than is it expressive of a pure thought. To establish this argument, his mastery of the history of music is called to service. Certain pieces of music which might be deemed as having no pictorial origin are shown to have been written as illustrating a series of pictures or events. Most music is programme music.

He considers Beethoven. It is argued by Hanslick that whether or not we know the definite subject which originated the work we have the composition and that suffices. This is challenged. Only in so far as we interpret music back into pictures or experiences is it meaningful. Music cannot be heard as remote from all things tangible and concrete, away from all experiences human and actual. That we do not have what was in the mind of the composer at the time is our loss. He illustrated, if nothing more tangible, certainly his own mood. An analogy from Schweitzer's other work will reveal the unity of his thought.

If a God-mysticism is not possible but can only be experienced through a historical figure, so pure music is not possible, it can only exist as illustration of definite occasion or expression of a mood actually felt.

Where we lack knowledge of what the composer intended or what inspired him we lost contact with the piece, however rich it be to us despite this. Great as may be our loss to a full understanding of what is termed "pure music" because we lack knowledge of what the musician would illustrate, or lack certainty of the mood he would externalize, we dare not add one

word of such help to the music once the genius is dead. Exception is allowed where Wagner interpreted the C Sharp Minor Quartette as "an actual day in Beethoven's life." * Only the great may interpret the great.

Bach as Tone Painter

This theory of the aesthetic is a long but interesting introduction to the study of Bach as tone painter. Throughout Schweitzer's study the art of the painter is always a near illustration. To demonstrate that Bach is a tone painter, not merely a writer of spiritual music, it is shown in what remarkable manner Bach fits the music to the words, the accent to the phrase. Common words are robed in purple: as master of the wardrobe, Bach receives the coarsely dressed peasants, delighting to send them forth from Leipzig as monarchs walking in majesty. Bach's music never overwhelms the words as certain accompanists drown the soloist. Though it is the music that is spirit and life, always the words retain their own individuality. True, the words of earth become as the sounds of eternity, but their earthly form is never dissolved.

Not only this: Bach gives to the words a rhythm that appears henceforward as the right and proper rhythm of such words. The rhythm he gives to a Bible text is one that cannot be forgotten: once emphasized by Bach, it is the inevitable rhythm belonging to these words: he enters into the one true understanding of the words and gives enduring beauty to this in his music. "Bach converts into tone not only the body but the soul of the verbal passage." † He not only clothes the words with sound as with a garment, he gives presence to the soul of the writing. It is strange that this understanding of the intimate relation of word and music in the Chorales should not have been known to Bach's son, who published the music without the correspond-

* *J.S.B.*, v. 2, p. 21.

† *ibid.*, p. 30.

ing text, and thus showed how far he was from understanding his father's art.

"It goes without saying that Bach seizes the poetic mood in its finest nuances." * An illustration of the remarkable manner in which Bach's music illustrates not only the words but communicates the inner meaning can be given. In the sacramental words of the last supper in the St. Matthew Passion there is no trace of grief. "The music breathes peace and majesty," † for Bach, with artistic insight, sees Jesus prophesying with radiant face the coming triumph.

It is striking that the vision of Jesus, which Schweitzer, the theologian, was later to make known, is in the Passion music: the devout musician, by reason of insight, penetrated to a knowledge of truth to which historical research would only attain long afterwards. He tells us that his sense of the dynamic Jesus came to him in a sudden illumination: but a flash only comes after the gunpowder is assembled. Had his preparation as theologian been the study of Bach's Passion music?

This power of Bach to give tonal emphasis to the verbal expression is considered in the book at great length. While giving illustration (characteristic of Schweitzer's musical writing, which is so fruitful in suggestion), an exposition of "treatment of a poor text" leads to an interesting contrast of Mozart and Bach; an exposition of Bach's relation to and difference from the programme music of the period leads to a study of religious art.

We elaborate this last point. In his music Bach does not tell a story. "He does not paint successive events, but seizes upon the pregnant moment that contains the whole event for him, and depicts this in music." ‡ As drama must lead to a climax and consist not of a story, but of illustrations of a significant event, so does Bach's

* *J.S.B.*, v. 2, p. 34.

† *ibid.*, p. 35.

‡ *ibid.*, p. 41.

music. The extreme programme musicians who illustrate every slight detail fall into the error of the Pre-Raphaelite painters, who thought that in rendering a static picture of one occasion they had successfully illumined a series of events. This is not possible. The reason Biblical painting is acceptable is, the story fully known to the observer, the figures on the canvas serve as aids to memory. Apart from this the picture would be meaningless. Pictures should contain within themselves their own completeness. In his music Bach recognized this: he does not seek to comment on the words or to illustrate every word; he seizes on and illustrates significant moments. (This is the basis of the modern cartoon.)

Bach is a tone painter. "If the text speaks of drifting mists, of boisterous winds, of roaring rivers, of waves that ebb and flow, of leaves falling from the tree, of bells that ring for the dying, of the confident faith which walks with firm steps, of the weak faith that falters insecure, of the proud who will be abased and the humble who will be exalted, of Satan rising in rebellion, of angels poised on the clouds of heaven, then one sees and hears all this in his music." * Though he ranges over the entire Bach music in selecting illustration we restrict ourselves to quoting his analysis of the St. Matthew Passion to serve the double purpose of illustrating Bach as a tone painter while showing in what way Schweitzer's book helps the reader to a deeper appreciation of Bach.

Concert Guide

Behind the words, "They went out into the Mount of Olives," sound bass notes, telling of heavy steps treading the path of sorrow. When Jesus approaches the disciples saying, "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" the violin picture is of Jesus shaking the dis-

* *L. & T.*, p. 82.

ciples to wake them from sleep. When the second part opens, "Now is my Saviour gone, whither went He?" there is a picture in the music of mourning women, running distractedly around, wringing their hands. When Judas sings, "Give me back my Lord, see the silver, price of blood, at your feet in horror poured," the sound of falling money, clinking down the temple steps, is heard in the music. Behind "In truth to bear the cross," on the last journey is a picture of utter physical exhaustion, even Jesus' fall under the weight of the cross is in the music; when Simon takes the cross immediately the music is strong and vigorous.*

A knowledge of architecture gives added delight in Oxford, though, lacking this, there is loveliness in plenty. Though beauty abounds for even the hurried visitor, much is hidden from the unlearned: from the Bodleian to St. Mary's is seventy yards to the visitor, but six hundred years to the historian. No book is more certain to deepen appreciation of Bach than Schweitzer's. As all agree that the music is not easy, this is necessary.

His analysis of the Mass in B Minor is most helpful. The "Kyrie Eleison" ("Lord have mercy upon us") is the cry of the universal Christian Church to its Father in Heaven: as the Church bends in adoration nation after nation enter His courts, and they also bend in lowly adoration. Behind the "Credo in unum Deum" ("I believe in one God") is a measured tranquil beat indicative of resolution and confident faith. In the creedal passage, "Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God," the music illustrates, as the alto continually comes out of the soprano lead, the theological doctrine that Christ proceeds from out of God the Father. The "Et incarnatus" chorus which tells of the incarnation illustrates in music the hovering of the Holy Spirit in the higher atmosphere as if it would

* *J.S.B.*, v. 2, pp. 210 ff.

seek for a body into which to enter. As it descends the motive appears in the bass, symbolizing that the spirit is abased in the flesh.*

This showing of pictorial and theological significance in the two great religious compositions, so helpful to the uninitiated, is carried through for the musical with illustrations from all the Bach compositions. The chief characteristic of Bach's music, as interpreted by Schweitzer, that it is architectonic, can be applied to this book itself.

If "the powerful aesthetic impression given by Bach's works comes from the harmony of the whole structure in which all the copious and animated details fit quite naturally," † so the impression of the book comes from the fact that every significant detail finds ordered place in the nine-hundred-page scheme of the work. If "Bach's music is the perfected Gothic of the art" ‡ Schweitzer's volume is the perfect analytic biography.

Not only fascinating as biography and great as an exposition, the book must be accredited as one of the major influences helping toward the Bach revival, so pleasing a feature of modern life. It is strange that Schweitzer should so despair of our generation when there is in us so widespread and deep a capacity to appreciate Bach. As Mendelssohn earlier worked, Schweitzer now works that Bach should rule our lives.

"Only he who sinks himself in the emotional world of Bach, who lives and thinks with him, who is simple and modest as he, is in a position to perform him properly. If the director and performer do not feel themselves in a consecrated mood, they cannot communicate such a mood to the hearer: something cold will settle upon the music and deprive it of its best strength. May this perception penetrate everywhere: then will Bach help our age to attain the spiritual unity and fervour of which it so sorely stands in need.

* *J.S.B.*, v. 2, pp. 311 ff. † *ibid.*, v. 1, p. 213. ‡ *loc. cit.*

“What is greater in this art, so full of natural life, so wonderfully plastic, and unique in the perfection of its form, is the spirit that breathes out from it. A soul which out of the world’s unrest longs for peace and has itself already tasted peace, allows others in this music to share its own experience.” *

* *J.S.B.*, v. 2, p. 468.

THE DYNAMIC JESUS

Light Along the Ages

To meet Jesus as he would have appeared to a Reuter correspondent is a strange experience: but, try as we will, we cannot keep the Jesus of history in 1949: he returns to his own period. As scholars we find Jesus greater than Pilate and Gamaliel in that he welded the functions of statesman and bishop in the white heat of his passion for world peace. As Christians we know Jesus as an imperious ruler who has authority over us. Showing Jesus as a man of his century while revealing his timeless significance is the work of Schweitzer as theologian.

Writers on Jesus may be grouped in three categories. The critical mind considers that what is known is of no dominating importance. Dr. Whitehead sees no reason why the Christian events should be considered as "out of scale in type of happenings with analogous occurrences elsewhere." * The Roman Catholic attitude teaches the theological Christ as it was taught sixteen hundred years ago. The Protestant approach works under the conviction that historical methods as applied to other figures and documents should be applied to Jesus and the Gospels.

From the catacombs to Mark Symons the portraits of Jesus have revealed the artist as much as they have portrayed the historical Jesus; from the morality plays to Schweitzer the lives of Jesus have revealed the writer

* *Ideas*, p. 212.

as much as they have described Jesus of Nazareth. The spirit of the age shines through in every presentation. The catacomb, the Byzantine, the Fra Angelico portraits all differ. Michael Angelo created a judge, Raphael a saviour of sinners, El Greco a pain-racked martyr, Murillo a figure of gentle benevolence; yet all painted Jesus. When printing superseded painting, rationalism, liberalism, and eschatology created a Jesus after the writers' own minds. Is Schweitzer but one in this long succession, or is he a revolution in Christian thinking?

If, because of research, we know more about Abraham than was known before, will history acknowledge that owing to Schweitzer, Protestant scholarship slowly changed its thought, and deepened its appreciation of Jesus? Will his insight influence Christian thinking even longer than da Vinci's "Last Supper" influenced Christian painting?

Genius has the power of entering a new world, darting through it with the speed of light, then giving to all its work a distinctive character derived from this illumination. Leonardo seized on the one significant pictorial moment and established a tradition. Schweitzer seizes the current belief about the end of the world held by Jesus, and finalizes a new tradition in theology.

Why is his view of Jesus more true than any other? Because, while retaining the old beauties, it makes understandable many New Testament texts which seemed obscure or out of harmony with our thought of Jesus. As Bach's choral music is not musically consistent apart from the texts it illustrates, so the gospels and Jesus are only consistent when this view enlightens.

An understanding of Jesus is correct when single texts and the entire text work together, each to complete the other. This is possible only with the Schweitzer understanding.

The World's Long Hope

In *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, before stating his own contribution, Schweitzer passes in review all significant earlier attempts to write a life of Jesus. They are shown to be inadequate as a satisfactory representation of Jesus, because, to maintain their interpretation, the writers must throw out difficult passages, must suggest a wrong understanding of these passages, or present an enfeebled picture of Jesus.

More important than mere criticism, he then shows how ably each generation of scholars over the last two hundred years has helped to build up an ever fuller and truer picture of the historical Jesus. This attempt of the historian to write biography consistent with the gospels is the work in which he himself is one of the greatest names. His work is twofold. It destroys the "liberal" Jesus: it presents the "eschatological," the dynamic Jesus.

We consider firstly its destructive aspect. Nineteenth-century thought pictured Jesus as a good shepherd—gentle, meek and mild. He had taught that men and society would slowly improve, if only the righteous would be faithful in service. Jesus was, as they represented him, an outstanding illustration of their favourite idea—"The progress of mankind onward and upward forever."

These liberal theologians acknowledged that the dominant idea of the Jews at the time of Jesus was a fevered expectation that the Messiah would come miraculously, to deliver them from all their troubles: but urged that Jesus did not share the idea that human history would be broken into by supernatural powers. The greatness of Jesus consisted in the fact that he strove to purify this gross expectation.

Liberal theology, though it had abandoned the thought that Jesus was "Incarnate Deity," "Very God

of Very God," the "Creator of all things visible and invisible," who for a time became man, had not the courage, Schweitzer feels, to be logical and realize that if he was man he must have shared the thought limitations of his time, even as he shared the scientific limitations of his time.

What is Schweitzer's constructive contribution? Always courageous, whether facing a dangerous African lunatic or a difficult religious problem, Schweitzer saw that if Jesus had shared this hope concerning national redemption many texts that seemed nonsense suddenly became vital with significant emphasis. As the realization that Judas, commissioned by Jesus, would leave the company gives meaning to the "Last Supper," so the realization that Jesus shared the belief in an impending world catastrophe gives significance to whole chapters of the Gospel. As da Vinci groups the disciples in such manner that, while individual character is clear, all are parts of one harmonious picture, Schweitzer gives true explanation of each single text, yet all are shown to be parts of one architectonic design.

Schweitzer's view is known as "the eschatological" because it insists that the public work and teaching of Jesus are only fully understood when it is perceived he was dominated by the social hope that the Messiah would miraculously inaugurate a golden age. To understand this strange notion we must remember that the Jews believed themselves a chosen people: God's favourites.

As a defeated nation their one compensation before the time of Jesus was a fevered belief that God would send to them a celestial help who would overcome their enemies and institute a golden age; a notion compounded of naive politics and peasant idealism. In the language of God's nursery the idea united the eternal and the temporal.

In the time of Jesus, in the minds of a few, this belief had heightened to certainty that the hour-glass sand had nearly run out: at any moment a man, Elijah, would come as a forerunner to announce the cataclysm. Then the celestial figure, The Messiah, would appear. The nations would not be able to resist him; he would crush them, giving chief place to God's favourites, the Jews. All nations would bow to them. They would sit in judgment.

Enjoying this eminence, and the perks it would bring, the Jew would rule in a rightful position. For a thousand years, according to artistic exaggeration, the lion would become a vegetarian and the life-glands would be so stimulated that men would die a hundred years old. When sympathetically understood it is apparent this was but the then form of the peace dream.

Liberal theologians dismiss the idea that Jesus shared this apocalyptic expectation of a miraculous close to world history. He was far beyond such notions. He, they assert, believed in the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, salvation by character, the slow leavening of the heavy world, the quiet coming of a golden dawn, the eventual salvation of every man. In him there was no harshness, no sectarianism, no nationalism; with shining beatitude he moved through a palm-shaded Galilee. He loved little children, was a gracious guest, full of compassion and mercy. Against him were the hypocritical Pharisees who urged the Roman governor to crucify him.

This gracious lord and master was not a true picture of the historical Jesus; it was too lacking in urgency, that sense of the last days, so plain in the Gospels. In its place Schweitzer describes a prophet, believing, as his people believed, that since God was for them, it did not matter who was against them; believing that his people were destined, set apart, to serve supreme pur-

pose. Feeling in himself the sorrow and tribulation of men, he longed for the redemption of Israel, gloried in the expectancy that soon, even before harvest was gathered, the new age would be established.

With passion, with serious aim, with grim determination, with steadfast high intent, he chose a fixed number of disciples, fired them with his own tense expectancy, and sent them out to proclaim the new kingdom. When disappointment proved the expectancy false he retired to meditate afresh upon his Gospel, and there was revealed to him that he must himself be an offering for the sins of the people, his death would be the purification which would make the nation worthy the better world.

If it is no depreciation of Socrates that he accepted slave labour as an essential foundation of the state, an idea we have outgrown, it is no depreciation of Jesus that he believed in the catastrophic end of the world, a belief proven false by continuing history. This is the choice: a Jesus two thousand years in advance of his time in social thinking, or a Jesus the child of his times, supreme by reason of the ethical intensity and moral fervour of his reforming passion. Liberal Protestantism thought of a Burne-Jones Jesus talking parables to a Millais congregation; Schweitzer presents a Michael Angelo Jesus challenging worldliness at the Vatican.

To the Roman Catholic thinker Jesus must remain as Rome decrees, but the Protestant should be thorough in his search for the historical Jesus. He ought not to go to the Gospels seeking a prototype of his ethical self; he must learn that Jesus, even if in error with his generation on certain issues, is an example of consecrated will driving a prophet to limitless service.

If Protestantism desires to represent Jesus as perfect man and to prove his greatness by attributing to him our ethical insight and our political ideas, why not go one step further and attribute to him our scientific

knowledge? If Jesus believed that Dives must suffer roasting torment, the bitter thought of a harsh time, he also believed that the world was flat. Either Jesus shared full knowledge with God or, as all others, he was one with his generation; but, where others were lukewarm, he was ablaze with passion for the Reign of God.

As da Vinci's "Last Supper" tells a simple, direct, and clear story, recognizable even by the simplest peasant, though later painters may discern subtleties in the artist's grouping, characterization or brush strokes, so Schweitzer's portrait of Jesus presents an elemental, forceful, and determined prophet, easily comprehended by the simplest believer, with, however, depths upon depths discernible to the serious student.

If it appears that Jesus as the perfect teacher is destroyed, if piety has lost its former object of adoration and example, the loss is temporary. When the Schweitzer Jesus is an essential part of Christian thinking he will still be the timeless example of how devotion may serve, even while in bondage to the thought of its own time.

The Public Ministry

In his book Schweitzer gives this record of the public life of Jesus. After contact with John the Baptist, and submission to the baptismal rite, Jesus entered on the prophetic ministry. From out of his earliest hearers Jesus "chose" twelve, a number related to the judgment they would later exercise over the tribes of Israel. There was no need to educate them in his teaching; they knew his thought, as all Israel knew it. What Jesus did was to waken in his disciples and in others, eager expectancy.

Hope had grown dim, folk did not care; worldly concerns choked the seed. There was no need to educate illiterate fishermen in the truths of ethical

religion as is commonly supposed, nor is there Scriptural evidence that Jesus taught them at any length before he sent them on their propaganda tour.

The message was "the Kingdom of God is at hand." Everyone, disciples and Galileans, knew what it meant. The Messiah was about to come. Hope revived. There was no time for lethargy, no time for sleep, no time for dancing. People must be up and stirring. At any hour The Messiah would be made manifest. What Jesus desired, before he sent out his disciples, was, not that they should understand the ethical implications of one good man leavening society, but, that they should be enthusiastic for the kingdom. What Jesus meant, when he spoke the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven, was *how suddenly these things happen*, how disproportionate to the result was the cause. Interpreting them as illustrations of the slow gradual spread of righteousness is reading later thought into earlier writings.

Now that John the Baptist was arrested, his stirring call to righteousness and expectancy must not go silent. He, Jesus, would send the message forth. When, therefore, he knew his disciples awakened to the nearness of the coming of The Messiah, he sent them out two by two with a simple stirring message: the Kingdom of God is at hand.

This cry held within its stirring call the banshee wail of the siren warning people of terror to come plus the United Nations hope of that remote period of history. Though modern parallels may startle, they are essential if the Gospel story is to live. This call, compounded of historical immediacy and eternal values, this call that was Oliver Cromwell and John Bunyan, meant disaster, judgment, a time of overthrowing—when it might be wise to flee to the mountains. Though the suffering would lead to a sunlit millennium the preceding tribulation would be terrible.

No wonder the people listened. The good news promised delivery from Rome, supremacy over the world, long continuing peace with a homestead for every man, milk and honey for every beggar, healing for all sick. No wonder there was enthusiasm. This was the bread and butter of the propaganda cry, "The Kingdom of God is at hand."

It was a simple rallying cry, charged with excited meaning to disciples and hearers. It ran over the countryside faster than a fast horse, as welcome to the people as the fall of Hitler to the Dutch. Long-desired Jewish vengeance understood its meaning. That the disciples went out to proclaim the brotherhood of man, that Levite and Samaritan, Jew and Roman, Publican and Pharisee, beggar and centurion, Syrian and Greek, were brothers, is ludicrous.

Such width of generosity was never on even the furthest horizon of their thought, nor was it in Jesus' mind, for he restricted the disciples from going to the Gentiles. Disciples and people understand what Daniel, Ezra and others had taught, that the Kingdom of God would come suddenly, as a thief in the night. Be prepared. A simple motto, a short message, a stirring hope, even fishermen could preach that.

They preached it, fired to inspired service by the ethical enthusiasm of Jesus. When a great message possesses a man he is beside himself, can talk of nothing else. Soon the district was agog with excitement. With irritating tolerance, superior education, the Pharisees investigated the matter, and Jesus replied sharply. The common people loved him, for they had everything to gain; religion had come to vigorous life again.

Jesus was no professional teacher of religion; the people felt his sincerity and responded warmly. They attended in crowds—dense, packed masses. Miracles happened. Sometimes Jesus healed as do Spiritualist

healers, sometimes he practised psychotherapy, sometimes he used the method of Christian Science; the methods are of slight matter; people were healed and this was a sign he was right, the kingdom was at hand.

Jesus shared the medical ideas of his time concerning insanity, that the mentally afflicted were possessed of demons; epilepsy was attributed to the same origin. It would be false to deny spirit possession but medical explanation must be accepted concerning diseases of the body and mental disorders.

We are apt to forget that Jesus lived before curative and preventive medicine, surgery and anaesthetics. It was natural for Jesus, as he used the word pictures of his time and could not possibly know the speed of light, to liken the Prince of Demons to a man who must look on impotent while his house is plundered and the sick taken from his clutches. Sickneses were thought to be the work of evil spirits.

This was the message, this was the atmosphere in which the disciples worked. "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses. Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

"And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake

off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city. Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." *

The disciples did not at first realize, nor did Jesus enlighten them, that he himself was The Messiah. They accepted his commission, servants not fully aware of the thought of the master. It was not yet time that he make known who he was. Their devotion was implicit, unquestioning. That the disciples should have responded to a promise of death and suffering is tribute to the power of Jesus as a leader; for he spoke in no uncertain language of the immediate persecution that awaited them, though there was prospect of glory and reward when the kingdom was established. Moreover, he was hard on the cities that would not receive them. These marching orders cannot be quoted in support of modern evangelizing work, for if we are to go

* Matt. 10. 5-23.

forth healing the sick and casting out demons, are we also—if a city will not receive us—to curse it as we leave?

The true thought of Jesus is manifest in the words of hope and prophecy: "Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." What fervent hope, what flaming glory, is within the assurance. In many people the Messianic peace was on the fringe of politics, a hope dimly cherished because coming from the prophets: but now it flamed in the very centre of discussion, an enduring peace pact that only delayed its manifestation.

While the disciples carried out their mission, and Jesus moved through the cities, John the Baptist sent from prison to inquire of Jesus if he was Elijah; a question which meant, was Jesus the forerunner of The Messiah, who had come to announce the terrible day of the Lord? As it was not opportune for Jesus to declare that he was indeed The Messiah, he sent answer relating the signs and wonders that attended his ministry; these were testimonies which the discerning could perceive. John could take comfort that the work was being carried on. Shortly after he returned this coded answer to the Baptist, he explained to others that if only they have ears to hear he will tell them that John is indeed Elijah, an indirect way of informing them that he, Jesus, was The Messiah.

He knew they would not credit the truth that God's chief promised revelation of himself, The Messiah, was even now on earth. They looked either backward to Abraham or forward to The Messiah for evidence and promise of God. They simply did not believe that in their own day the supreme revelation of God, the long-promised, long-expected Messiah, was with them, so convinced were they that he would be a supernatural figure. The greatness of Jesus is that he dared to say, in the intellectual dialect of his time, the supreme revelation

of God is not in the past nor in the future, but in the present.

That Jesus took to himself the Messianic title is clear. He had been called by God. Why? No vessel may question the potter whether it is a vessel of honour or dishonour. His destiny was sure. The first person singular, I, is heard again and again.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." †

Strangest of all in the thought of Jesus, as interpreted by Schweitzer, is the marshalling of evidence to prove that Jesus believed in predestination. "And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable. And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: That seeing they may see, and not perceive: and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them." ‡

This implied that from a godless world some are chosen; many may be called but only a few are elected. There is an even stranger thought implied; strange to modern moral sense. It is possible, by an external compliance, baptism for instance, to secure unworthy

* Matt. 7. 21-23. † Matt. 5. 11-12. ‡ Mark. 4. 10-12.

entrance to the kingdom, as one who has a forged passport may gain entrance to Britain. John the Baptist was bitter on this. Though he refused baptism to none, he called the Pharisees who came to the Jordan a "brood of vipers"; the language of a zealot who scorns the mob securing eleventh-hour salvation by compliance with the necessary baptismal rite.

"For he that hath, to him shall be given and he shall have abundance: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath."* This meant that the predestined, by reason of their election, understand the parables and so have added knowledge, whereas in time to come the less fortunate will suffer complete separation from beatitude. In the king's son parable, though responding to a pressing public invitation addressed to good and bad, one unfortunate man is cast into outer darkness because he does not have a wedding garment—is not one of the elect.

This is the least acceptable of Schweitzer's contentions. To see predestination in the Gospel is fantastic to the liberal theologians, who attribute to Jesus, not only our sense of history as a slow onward progression toward an ethical kingdom, but our sense that all men will eventually be saved. Though Luther brushed aside predestination by pointing to the judgment hall saying, "Consider the wounds of Christ," Calvin is not so easily vanquished. Calvin was a great religious force; even today many godly men believe in "election": "predestination" is essentially the idea of privilege; one enjoys what is denied to a hundred others: arrogant unless tempered by a sense of responsibility.

The entire Jewish thinking was at that time founded on the conviction they were the privileged race. Predestination is only a personalizing of this idea of privilege. Jesus' tense earnestness, which gave im-

* Matt. 13. 12.

mediacy to the coming of The Messiah, which accepted his tragic destiny, quickened this most intimate of Jewish beliefs—privilege, given by God to whom He will. Where the Jews thought of the race, Jesus, with sensitive ethical insight, thought of the individual. Human thought took a big step toward the manhood of every man.

The Triumph over Disappointment

Though there is little sanction in the Gospels for a detailed chronology of Jesus' life, certain moments as emphasized by Schweitzer are significant. After some weeks the disciples returned to Jesus to report on their mission. This return was a bitter disappointment to Jesus. As he had promised, he had expected, that before they had gone through the cities of Israel, he would have been manifested as Messiah. Here they were back and nothing had happened. Tax collectors, fishermen, soldiers, Pharisees, continued their accustomed life. The disappointment would have sent a lesser nature back to the carpenter's shop.

The acute discernment of this insight is just here; it emphasizes that despite his popular success as a teacher, despite the crowds that listened to his parables, Jesus experienced a keen bitter frustration. He was not interested in personal success, had no eye for personal advantage, suffered from no mental derangement concerning his own greatness. He had but one simple thought, one all-consuming passion: that the Kingdom of God, the Holy Peace, should be brought to pass. Then angels, the quick and the dead, would be judged, the righteous elect to everlasting glory, the others to damnation. That he was the destined Messiah was an election to glory he had accepted, as later he would accept election to suffering and death.

Without hesitation, on the return of the disciples which proved his expectation wrong, Jesus retired from

popular teaching to consider the now obvious mistake in his expectancy. His prophecy that The Messiah would be miraculously manifested even before they had completed their home missionary tour had been proven false. But why, even so, give up this teaching work at the moment when it was so successful?

His parables were heard over a wide area. His sayings circulated from village to village. His healing power was strong: but, to his own consciousness, this was not his true God-destined work; popular teaching was incidental. He must sacrifice this fame, must give over this teaching, that his messiahship might be manifested. All must be subordinated to this dogmatic sense.

Even as a man sells all he has to secure the pearl of great price, so he must sacrifice popularity, personal enjoyment of fame, opportunity to heal, that he may bring to glorious realization the Kingdom of God. Not the glory of Jesus but the good of the people, not the soldier but the victory, this was the urgency which led him to loneliness and to death. What was fame, what were a few parables, what signified a leper cleansed, as against no more war, the Kingdom of God? Nothing. As earlier he had there received his call, been destined to the work, so again he went into the wilderness to learn further of God what he must do.

Before leaving the crowd he celebrated a Messianic meal with them. They did not realize its full significance, but they felt the solemnity. It was evening; they were made to sit down in ordered companies. Jesus then took the little food necessary for the celebration, gave thanks, and distributed to the silent companies. They had eaten with The Messiah and, adapting eastern courtesy to religious end, they were now joined in a lasting bond. This was his impressive, ceremonial farewell to popular greatness. After the celebration Jesus slipped quietly away from the crowds,

having baptized none. Why did he continue the preaching of the Baptist, but not also his baptism? Because his own presence had adequate sacramental significance.

Jesus went into retirement with his disciples, still the appointed number, to Tyre and to Caesarea Philippi. He did not flee, as his journey to the north is often interpreted. One who later went so determinedly to death was not the one to flee his enemies. In the wilderness, retired from active ministry, enlightenment came: the passage concerning the suffering servant, as written by Isaiah, gave to him his understanding.

The reason why God had delayed the great manifestation was now clear. A sufficient number of the elect had not yet turned from their worldly habits to a life of consecration. It was as possible for the elect to fail in righteousness as it was possible for a younger son to be a prodigal: election to privilege did not necessarily mean that the one elected would be worthy, though the unworthiness delayed the glorious consummation of God's purposes. Not only this; it was revealed to him that he, by his suffering, could serve as ransom for many, his suffering as Messiah would spare the elect the terrible suffering they must otherwise endure.

When he told his enlightenment to the twelve, Peter, who shared the national hope of Messiah as a figure of proud triumph, indignantly expostulated. The sharp rebuke shows in what way Jesus was still prisoner to the thought of his age. He regarded Peter at that moment as the Devil's emissary. He held the naive cosmogony of two contending world powers. Satan was guileful, but soon he would be worsted; then he would have to look on helpless while some of the elect whom he had ensnared were rescued from his nets. If, to us, Jesus appears limited by his age, to the disciples he was far ahead. Thought moves.

Strong in conviction that his vicarious suffering would

speed the coming of the kingdom, he set himself steadfastly to go to Jerusalem. When he celebrated the supper he spoke his last message to the disciples: "I say unto you, I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." * He would go to suffering and death. At once afterwards the kingdom would be manifested. Even the sense of predestination could not take away the natural human shrinking, "If it be possible": but God did not mitigate the severe demands. This was the mind of Jesus: what of the external events?

During the evening Judas betrayed the Messianic secret to the High Priest. He did not need to betray to the authorities where Jesus was. He was not in hiding. Quite the contrary—he had openly cleared the temple. The Messianic secret once betrayed to the High Priest, a stern predestinarian incident, "needs must that offences come, but woe to him through whom they come," † death to Jesus was certain. To claim Messiahship in Jerusalem was more offensive blasphemy than for us to deny the Virgin Birth in Canterbury or to remain seated during the national anthem.

Jesus was arrested. When before the High Priest, he himself admitted the only evidence which could kill him, "that he was Messiah." The words, his own admission, sealed the death warrant: "I am, and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Then the High Priest rent his clothes, and saith, "What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye?" They condemned him worthy of death.‡

"In the knowledge that he is the coming son of man Jesus lays hold of the wheel of the world to set it moving

* Matt. 26. 29. † Matt. 18. 7; Luke 17. 1.

‡ Matt. 26. 36-68.

on that last revolution which is to bring all ordinary history to a close. It refuses to turn, and he throws himself upon it. Then it does turn and crushes him. Instead of bringing in the eschatological conditions, he has destroyed them. The wheel rolls onward, and the mangled body of the one immeasurably great man, who was strong enough to think of himself as the spiritual ruler of mankind and to bend history to his purpose, is hanging upon it still. That is his victory and his reign." *

From Gennesaret to Gettysburg

The question is asked: why did Jesus preserve secrecy? Why did he not earlier openly declare his messianic conviction? Even as Paul spoke God's Word in a mystery, Jesus knew that the people were not ready for the full truth. Accustomed to think of The Messiah as a celestial figure, they would not believe that God had elected a man, had chosen a weak thing of this world to confound mighty empires. That was a mystery too deep for common people: it must be spoken in parables: those who had ears to hear would hear: the elect would respond.

One consequence of this insight is that the teaching of Jesus is seen to be an "Interim's Ethic," a teaching that would precipitate The Kingdom. This is an offence to many. Actually this in no way detracts from the teaching, nor takes from its validity today, where confirmed by our spiritual intuition. That Jesus spoke the Beatitudes in the spirit of messianic prophecy to his immediate disciples, that he promised them great reward in Heaven because of their persecution here, demonstrates that it was an "Interim Ethic" all to be speedily fulfilled.

Despite that it did not come to pass, the Beatitudes have meaning for us to the degree that our spiritual

* *The Quest*, p. 369.

intuition feels in them a lasting significance, though he spoke them as a temporal promise. As the Psalms, written as songs for the Temple of David are acceptable to us because confirmed by our own religious experience, so the Beatitudes, spoken as temporal promises, are still vital because we find in them our sense of religion.

It is strange that Schweitzer's proof that Jesus' teaching had a local importance is considered derogatory. History and literature amply manifest that all work of lasting significance was at one time genius responding to a passing call. The finest expression of the democratic ideal was spoken by Lincoln at Gettysburg to serve as a tribute to fallen heroes; yet he spoke what will live for centuries. Luther spoke the priesthood of every believer as a word apt to his own century, yet it led to the deepening of religious experience for a long time afterwards. Words live in terms of their temporal aptness and eternal value.

Already Schweitzer's insight has led those who understand to a deepened experience of God in history. Few who read his *Quest* and *Paul* remain unconvinced; all are influenced even if they do not fully agree. He shows in what wonderful manner The Eternal clothes itself with the temporal. Weak in himself and of human stature, restricted by the narrow circumference of his humble life, Jesus, by force of inner conviction, subordinated history to his will. He is not lost either to piety or to history in that he is proven a child of his generation. "A mighty spiritual force streams forth from him and flows through our time also." *

This understanding of Jesus cannot end in the sterile "natural humanity of Jesus," "mere man" negations. Historical truth compels a revision of our theology admitting that the Jesus of history was a man of his times; but he yet lives. "Not Jesus as historically

* *The Quest*, p. 397.

known, but Jesus as spiritually arisen within men, is significant for our time and can help it. Not the historical Jesus, but the Spirit which goes forth from Him and in the spirits of men strives for new influence and rule, is that which overcomes the world." *

Schweitzer realized that his view of Jesus would be hurtful to Christian piety, but only as the loss of the body was hurtful to Mary Magdalene. As by faith she beheld the Risen Christ where she had expected only to look upon the shrouded body, so now there is presented to us a vital dynamic Jesus.

Evidence of the power in this insight, the spirit that was in Jesus when he determined to leave his teaching in the hour of its greatest success, determined by a higher insistence, so worked upon Schweitzer himself that he forsook his teaching and his music that he might go to Africa there to build a Lambaréné hospital. Mystical oneness with Jesus is, as it ever was, possible to the man of consecrated will: it leads as of old to service—and suffering.

Paul the Apostle

Leonardo da Vinci painted fewer pictures than the contemporary masters yet has more influenced painting. Schweitzer, writing only four books on Christian origins, dominates church history. That he is more than a scholar especially commends his analysis of Paul. To achieve mastery of the material, penetrate to keenest insight, a writer must to a certain degree share the character of his subject. By reason of endowment and mode of life, Schweitzer the scholar is uniquely fitted to interpret Paul, the elemental thinker.

From boyhood, when he refrained from cards lest his passionate nature lead him to gambling, to manhood, when he gave himself without reserve to the task in hand, Schweitzer is near to the determined often

* *The Quest*, p. 399.

impulsive Paul. The Threefold Sacrifice is as near to the months after Damascus as modern experience can approximate. The scholar-musician, indebted to Harnack and Widor, who undertook hospital work in Africa that he might alleviate suffering and tell the story of Jesus, is one with the scholar of the law, indebted to Gamaliel, who undertook far journeys to tell his gospel of joy. This affinity of experience is presumptive argument that he is well fitted to interpret the mind and thought of Paul ; his book is conclusive.

Having claimed that the teaching of Jesus does not go outside the Jewish world of thought, that it represents a deeply ethical and perfected version of the contemporary expectation regarding the catastrophic end of the world order, Schweitzer then shows the source of Paul's teaching, with exposition how Paul expanded his thought. The book *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle* is the third volume of a projected *History of the Early Church* which, when completed, will trace Christian thought from the Jerusalem apostles, through Paul to the Christian fathers, where the Hebrew thought of Jesus was fully hellenized. That his presentation of Jesus might have fitting continuation, that his theme, the eternal conditioned by the temporal, might be completely established, Schweitzer the historian applied to the Epistles the criteria so successful when applied to the Gospels.

The results of the Pauline study can be given in a sentence: as Jesus did not, in his political thinking, rise above Jewish expectancy, but gave breath and vigour to the prevailing hope, so Paul ever remained, of the Jews, a Jew ; he derived his thought solely from Judaism, the religion of his tutor ; only by reason of his mystical oneness with Christ, by reason of his zeal, did he become first of the Apostles, one who never having seen, yet served most loyally.

Paul has often been unfortunate in his biographers.

There is a prejudice against him, because it is wrongly thought that he petrified the living teaching of Jesus, that he badly confused Judaism and Hellenism. In liberal exposition he is presented as having obscured in a fog of justification by faith, the universal theism of Jesus. It is not so. Paul was a deep thinker, facing a crucial issue, an impassioned man, second in devotion only to his master. One painter has understood Paul, Rembrandt. With delicate brown shadings Paul is depicted as an old man; in youth we are as nature formed us, in age as we have made ourselves.

Because he feels himself one with Paul, a liberty impossible to him when considering Jesus, Schweitzer indulges sympathetic artistic presentation. If he would allow the latter half of chapter nineteen of *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, chapters seven, twelve and fourteen of *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*, to be separately printed, a wide circle of enthusiastic readers would be gained.

The Schweitzer writings are not always easy reading; worthy of study, an effort is called for. *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*, in the opinion of this writer his greatest book, may be likened to the city of Mysore. A long tree-shaded road leads to the Capital. In the city are lovely buildings, marble palaces, and many flower-wreathed shrines. Chamandi Hill brings the traveller to an entrancing view: a quiet river flows through the valley: the city lies at the foot of the hill. When night falls, the city lights flash into a picture of fairy extravagance. This view cannot pass from memory. Nor will the reader who has studied through the magnificent three-hundred-page approach, ever forget the Paul then made manifest.

The Will to Serve

The Schweitzer microscope brings out great beauty in "suffering, as a dying with Christ." To read the tale

of frequent sufferings is to be ashamed of one's immunity; it is to be humbled. Stoned till he was left for dead, scourged and thrown into prison, saved from death at the hands of a furious mob, "five times scourged by the Jews, three times beaten with rods, repeatedly in prison, three times he suffered shipwreck, being a night and a day adrift on the sea, he suffered hunger, thirst and nakedness and was in danger in deserts and from robbers." * Schweitzer's two-page analysis of scourging is thorough and makes the words "five times scourged" painfully real.

Added to this, Paul was delicate and sickly, suffering from epileptic attacks. The words, "See with what large letters I have written to you," † indicated failing sight due to strenuous life. There were also mental and spiritual troubles, worries of the churches; and the labour of thinking out a life philosophy. But he can do all things through Christ who strengthens him: "Now I will most gladly boast of my weakness, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I rejoice in weakness, ill-treatment, hardship, persecution and affliction for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then am I strong." ‡

"This man, maltreated, sick, going in constant danger of his life, had thus in addition an excessive burden of mental and spiritual troubles to endure. But he understood the meaning of that suffering," § Schweitzer writes this of Paul; omit "maltreated" and it is autobiography, as is also, "Paul is a figure to provoke admiration. For he is the embodiment of what he taught." It is almost possible to write a biography of the African Schweitzer, using only quotations from his *Paul*, so near to parallel are the two life stories.

Even in this little matter likeness is evident. One trying aspect of The Threefold Sacrifice was that

* 2. Cor. 11. 24-27. † Gal. 6. 11. ‡ 2 Cor. 12. 10.

§ *Paul*, p. 158.

Schweitzer had to sacrifice financial independence; he must depend on the gifts of generous friends. With obvious approval he points out that Paul never allowed the Corinthians to help him, because they were capable of making him feel his dependence, but he is grateful to the Philippians, happy to receive their gifts. Paul is represented as a "steward, whose one concern is to be faithful"; for the sake of his Gospel he humbles himself below what the natural man would tolerate; when Schweitzer went out as a beggar for his hospital he did not like that part of his job.

The character of Paul is etched with a few Rembrandt strokes, every sentence is sure. A celibate himself, Paul is considerate for others; does not demand a like rigour from them. Yet he can be stern! If John Mark failed once he is not again to be taken as a companion: but "firmness is not easy to him; he has to force himself to it. Gentleness keeps breaking through." * Zealous as a result of moral discipline, by nature he was diffident. He braced himself for his work by an act of will. In the words "I was with you in weakness, fearfulness and great diffidence" † Schweitzer penetrates to a glimpse of the historic Paul which supports his central thesis, that will, not knowledge, is chiefly significant. Will to carry through, regardless of sacrifice or natural disposition, what you know is duty, is more inspiring than great knowledge.

"For the Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power," ‡ is a quiet saying with which Paul pricked the bubble of Corinthian conceit. This is a Schweitzer comment on certain philosophers: not the subtlety of the idea but its power to influence men to do good is what matters. Paul is possessed by the thought that God has called *him* to a unique work for Christ, that Christ's spirit manifests itself in his thought, speech and action, yet always this sense of privilege is sobered by a

* *Paul*, p. 325.

† 1 Cor. 2. 3.

‡ 1 Cor. 4. 20.

sense of great responsibility. This is Schweitzer acknowledging life's inequalities of talent and social privilege, but insisting that a compensating service must be rendered; responsibility must dull the edge of exquisite joy. Paul is Schweitzer's ethical hero; sacrifice and suffering mark the hero.

Greek or Hebrew

The core of Pauline study consists of two important questions: (1) to what degree did Paul share the Messianic expectations of Christ, and in what way did he interpret this in view of (a) the death of Christ, and (b) the subsequent delay in the manifestation of the Messianic kingdom? (2) Did Paul crudely adapt Greek ideas to serve Christian purposes, or did he work his way through to thoughts and practices like to hellenic sacraments, which however derived from his own Jewish mysticism?

In much of the book Schweitzer is on common ground with others, but, when answering these questions in the light of his interpretation of Jesus, he is at variance with orthodox scholarship. Where usually Paul is represented as a confused theologian, a plagiarist of hellenic sacraments, an adapter of Greek thought, Schweitzer represents Paul as a man of original mind, a scholar saturated with Jewish thought, clear in his every syllable.

Answering the first question, Schweitzer asserts that Paul fully shared the expectation which Jesus held, that an immediate end to world history was imminent. There are, of course, significant differences in Paul's thought contrasted with Jesus' thought, due to the postponed manifestation of The Messiah.

Answering the second question, Schweitzer details in what remarkable manner Paul thought his way through to the theory and practice of baptism, the Lord's Supper, and related doctrines, the theory and the practice fully

derived from Judaism, with no indebtedness whatever to hellenism.

Because of the Greek influence discernible in the Gospel, because of the Greek thought in the early fathers, because of certain texts in some New Testament literature bearing the name of Paul, it has been urged that Paul plagiarized Greek sacraments and Greek mysticism that he might give a background and a vista to Christian ethical demands. But, answers Schweitzer, would any thinker, disciplined in Greek immanence, with a strong Stoic appreciation of the inevitability of natural law, ever have believed in the Jewish idea that, in the twinkling of an eye, earthly empires would crash as the Reign of Peace began.

That Paul so believed is clear. This was a dominating thought in his life and gave urgency to his journeys. Where a Greek-instructed Paul is urged, this question has to be answered—how was it possible for a thinker, whose spiritual home was Athens, to believe in ideas so foreign, so repellent to the genius of Greece, as to teach (as Paul certainly did teach) that history would be catastrophically interrupted, empires overthrown and the millennium established. To the Greek, with his sense of law and order, the whole idea was babbled nonsense. To say that Paul held to Greek and Hebrew ideas of history at the same time, is to suggest that he understood neither.

To prove that Paul shared the Hebrew religious-political thought, Schweitzer contrasts Hebrew and Greek ideas on three issues to validate his contention that Greek mystery-religion practices markedly differ from Pauline teaching.

Greek mystery taught that believers became God, were deified at the moment of blood immersion, but Paul teaches that the believer only enjoys continuing fellowship with Christ. The Hebrew sense of the transcendent God was too strong in Paul for him to

tolerate the Greek identification of the believer with God.

In the mystery cults salvation was open to all who shared the external ceremonies, a religious practice mechanical in its thought: money was helpful, as it gave admission to select celebrations; there was an aristocratic, aloof spirit among the initiates. Paul, remembering "without money and without price," glories in the marked preference God shows in electing the poor; once a member of Christ you are in a uniformed democracy, the only difference, degrees in privilege of serving. Human thought took a big step toward tomorrow's democracy.

The baptismal practice of the Greek mystery religions, because mechanical, was a single experience, the salvation value continued valid for an entire lifetime; but Paul's Hebrew thought of salvation was that of a continuing consecration of devotion. Despite his doctrine of "election" his emphasis on ethical service was so pronounced that he even allowed it possible that a believer could fall from grace. Human thought took a big step toward devout and holy living.

Schweitzer maintains that Greek thought in no way vitally affected Paul's ideas.

His sacramental practices and doctrines do not derive from Greek thought, though they may bear a like appearance. As culture originated spontaneously in Egypt and America with similarity of building because a like need evoked a similar response, so sacramentalism originated spontaneously in Greece and in Palestine, in the mystery religions, and in Christianity. The same need called for it, but there was little connection. Because Paul was Hebraic in his thinking he was able to set within Christianity an ethical urgency lacking in the Greek religions: Jesus more than Socrates has inspired the Good Samaritans of history.

The Triumph over Death

The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle is not a life story; it is the quarry from which later builders will hew their foundation and coping stones. In so far as it observes chronology it shows that, following his Damascus experience, when he began to think out the Christian gospel, Paul's chief problem was—where were those believers who had died since the crucifixion?

Paul, and the believers actually alive at Christ's return, would be caught up to meet him in the air; but where were those who had died while he tarried his coming? Would they also, being dead, be caught up at the rapture? What was their state in death? They, the elect, the privileged, could not possibly—because The Messiah, Christ, had been manifested—share the sombre destiny of the common multitude and dwell in the shades, a tenuous, uneasy existence.

For Jesus the difficulties had not existed. His scheme of the last events was simple. He expected a judgment, which, at his appearance as Messiah, would include angels and all men. Prior to this judgment, and in preparation for it, the general resurrection of the dead would take place. Those alive at the time of the judgment, along with all who had been raised from the dead, would receive sentence, some to second death, others to life. In the Happy Earth, then to renew its Eden innocence, human history would end. Christ's reign would begin.

For Paul the world clock had struck twelve. The revolution was on. Though Jesus and Paul were statesmen of a kingdom about to be established, our modern language does not fit the situation. We no longer expect any such happening, though Fundamentalists still do take all this literally, which is why their proofs from the Bible are always so accurate. Paul understood Jesus thoroughly. The only difference

was that Jesus had thought the hour was quarter to twelve.

This religious-political idea was complicated now that The Messiah had lived on earth but was not yet returned as celestial judge; it was further complicated because the saints were a privileged minority not under consideration by Jesus. To Paul must go credit for the suggestion there would be two resurrections. The old idea had it that there would be one resurrection when elect and damned would rise together at the end of time, the elect to go with The Messiah to bliss, the damned to perdition.

It would be otherwise, Paul taught. When Christ came the bodies of the sainted dead would rise to meet the living when they joined their Lord. After the long peace on earth, when the saints would subdue all secular kingdoms, there would then be the second resurrection when the multitude of the common dead would be raised to judgment.

Paul believed in a sudden catastrophic commencement of the reign of God. His greatness is that he realized he must amplify the doctrine of Jesus concerning the Great Peace to meet the changed circumstances.

Only those who have striven to fashion for themselves an understanding of life, complete and full, not accepting a philosophy ready-made, are in a position to understand all that Paul achieved. Our thought differs vastly in the fashion of our religious-political ideas.

Paul went far into the Gentile world telling his tidings of glad joy. What were they? That the natural order was already mysteriously ended, that the elect were already living in a supernatural state, were already supernatural beings, *only it was not yet manifest*. When Jesus, The Messiah, came, at any moment, their supernatural nature would be revealed, and perpetual

Sabbath would be established. What a joy to be called to this high destiny. What a fervour it evoked. The Greeks called him a babblers: they held to the thought of a slow evolutionary transformation of society which now dominates our world thinking.

Whatever explanation of the world scheme is evolved, difficulties remain. Paul, considering evil, felt that God permitted imperfections for a purpose which man cannot fathom: but this inadequacy of his knowledge did not lessen his ardour in proclaiming his Gospel. He wished to travel even to Spain that he might draw from out of the population those few mysteriously elected by God to help The Messiah to run his government. When the converts came to the required number, a secret known to God, the miracle would happen and the long peace be established.

This was the one end: nothing else mattered, not even the law—much as The Apostles might urge otherwise. Each man should keep to the state in which he was when he made his election sure. Was he Jew? Let him remain Jew. Was he Gentile? Let him remain Gentile. As Mohammedans and Hindus retain their own religion under British rule so Jew or Gentile should retain their status in the church fellowship. The Jerusalem Apostles regarded it as a slight to the law. Though Paul himself observed the law, because he was under it when he became a Christian, it was not obligatory on other Gentile believers; they were freed from it.

This subtlety was lost upon the fishermen Apostles. Paul was thorough, logical and clear, within his own system of ideas. Gentile believers (had not God elected them?) must be accepted as welcome equals, must share the feast and the sacrament with Jewish believers. (To urge this upon the elders at Jerusalem was as bold as Lincoln appealing to the slave owners.) Paul battled fiercely for the brotherhood of all believers;

not to be confused with the brotherhood of all men, a modern idea. Through Paul liberty took a big step forward.

Through Redemption to Service

Paul not only shared with Jesus his faith in an imminent catastrophic end of the natural world, with resurrection and judgment to follow, Paul also shared the belief of Jesus in predestination: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." *

Gradations and inequalities were accepted by Paul as a mystery. He believed in a hierarchy. God, Christ, man, woman, concentric rings within the elect. To be an Israelite was a privilege; who could explain it? To be "elect" was a privilege. The modern world dislikes this: but are our theories any better a social cement?

John of Gaunt spoke truly of King Richard: the son inherits the father's rights. This is privilege, a practice to which we are still in bondage. Normal inheritance has implicit within it no ethical urgency, whereas predestination is potent to lives of earnest righteousness: all theories of society have strength and weakness.

Paul had an interesting difficulty with mixed marriages. If a believer was married, what would happen if the partner did not believe? As today, so also then, natural feeling prevailed and predestination gave way. Paul taught that the believer would sanctify

* Rom. 8. 28-30.

the partner, both would realize blessedness together. Carried still further in personal relationships the doctrine of election would have been riddled.

Paul believed that he knew of a silent invisible drama, being enacted behind the scenes of world history, which he would show to believers. This was his strong appeal. He would draw aside the curtain of time and, behold, such things as would not be believed. This sense of showing a mystery characterized his mysticism. He endowed it with the quality of surprise and privilege. Paul was a good preacher. He made the believers feel that being in Christ was a real co-experiencing of his dying and rising again. In a strange sense they shared the crucifixion. This was Paul's supreme creation; an idea fruitful to eternal life. Sacrifice, that others be helped, was firmly established as the mark of a Christian.

Why is the phrase "being in Christ," the foundation of Christian mysticism, so important? Schweitzer gives this answer, most revealing as an insight into the sources of his own deepest inspiration: "God-mysticism, in the sense of a direct becoming-one with the infinite creative will of God, is impossible of realization. All attempts to extract living religion from pure monistic God-mysticism are foredoomed to failure, whether they are undertaken by the Stoics, by Spinoza, by Indian or by Chinese thought. They know the direction, but they do not find the way." * For Paul, only Christ-mysticism was helpful to the realization of fierce burning ethical passion. The God of every child has a face like Father or Mother. To us, God's children, Paul shows Jesus Christ as the face of God Eternal.

If chapters seven and twelve is the church militant, they show to us Paul as he suffered and adventured, chapter fourteen is the church triumphant, it com-

* *Paul*, p. 378.

municates to us Paul the mystic. Two thoughts were for Paul the alpha and omega of the Christian experience. There was a redemptive experience, a salvation from sin, and there was a passionate assurance that beyond tomorrow was a fair and lovely country—the Messiah's world.

As Columbus was financed by the desire to obtain a continuous supply of spices, a little taste of which so thrilled the generation they must have more, so Paul was slave to his appetite for God. Had he not tasted, and did he not long to lead the elect to that land of pure delight where they would forever feast upon the joy of which he had had such rapturous foretaste? Once we have felt with Paul what it is to be saved, gloriously redeemed from the lower nature, liberated as free souls to rise above the storms and stress of life, once we have seen the shining glory, never again can we walk through London or New York and see only the muddy streets.

This should be the end of religious study: to communicate to us the ecstasy which drove Paul through shipwreck, flogging and defeat, the sympathy which drove Schweitzer through sacrifice, dysentery and bodily pain. As Paul in all his grandeur, his tensivity of purpose, his passionate desire to realize the kingdom, is in the intimacy and friendliness of the Epistle to the Romans, even so also the personal grace, the ruthless self-giving, the severe devotion to highest duty which is Schweitzer, is in chapter fourteen.

As in Bach's *Mass in B Minor* Protestantism and Catholicism are harmonized, so in Pauline thought personal redemption and social service are divinely joined. Always there is an emphasis that Christ has saved the believer from sin, and without this there is no religion. This salvation from the lower self, this rising to be one with the higher, is a deliverance, an experienced rising. Where there is no longing to be

delivered, sighs plaintive as the *Misere Nobis*, where there is no cry of joyous delivery as exults triumphantly in the *Osanna*, there is no religion as Paul knows religion.

Religion is not merely personal redemption; it is a pained, anguished, yet glorious striving to create the perfect earth. On this Paul insists. Had it been otherwise he could have remained in Tarsus. This drove him from city to city, a man with a vision having no abiding place. As we watch the Furies hounding Orestes we forget the local illustration and see only moral law.

When we read of Paul's enthusiasm for the kingdom, we forget his strange ideas and perceive only a passion for social righteousness. "As the uniquely great teacher of all times, he lays on us the task of striving to make more profound both our belief in redemption through Christ and our belief in the Kingdom of God, and to become constantly more strongly established in both." *

When Christianity, with its present truer enlightenment, can again as perfectly balance these two essentials, as alto and tenor are balanced in the closing duet of Handel's *Messiah*, then, and only then, will the lost radiance of the Christian religion shine again.

Though there is no reference in the Pauline letters to the parables or to the Sermon on the Mount, though in his writings we lose sight of Jesus, the teacher, the reason is clear. Emphasis then required, Jesus the Christ. Without Paul there would be no Christianity. As Vivekananda systematized Ramakrishna, else the greater would not have endured in Indian history, Paul systematized Jesus: thus the greater was given to history as a redemptive power. "Paul leads us out upon the path of true redemption, and hands us over prisoners, to Christ." †

* *Paul*, p. 384.

† *ibid.*, p. 396.

Help to Preachers

It is rare that new insight is invited to a cup of tea on first introduction. We must get to know the stranger. This dynamic gospel is strange—as the Reformation was strange. Fundamentalist and Liberal both reject this new stone because of differing dislikes, yet it is the one foundation if Protestantism is to rebuild in a secular world. On this insight and on this alone is the work of Luther safe.

Preaching will be strengthened when this insight is common knowledge: the pulpit will speak with authority. Appealing to present-day enlightenment, never speaking contrary to reason, living within a scientific culture, the church will use what was local to Galilee as alive for today. People will know they need not accept the words as truth for today but as illustration how the ethical spirit invigorates modern life from ancient example.

When this insight is worked out the Lord's Prayer flames with spiritual intensity and earnest immediacy. "Our Father, whose Home is Heaven: Your name is ever sacred. Establish, at once, Your international: Your will must be obeyed, in our homes and by government, as it is obeyed in heaven. Give us, today, the better life we hope to have tomorrow. Forgive us our aggressions as we forgive our aggressors. Lead us not into the atom war but deliver us from such evil. Even so, Your World rule, Your Justice, Your triumph, will finally prevail. Hurrah."

Establish at once Your International. This, when spoken, was an anguished pleading for one thousand years of world peace—the League of Nations phrase of that age. Kingdom held a vivid hope, as real to the Disciples as the United Nations' Organization is real to us. When Jesus taught the prayer, parson and politician were one single person. What Jesus taught

is religion for Parliament, politics for Westminster Abbey. The civil authority, God's left hand, must feed, clothe, and house the people: the church, His right hand, must guide them to still waters.

One impressive aptness comes to life when we read the prayer using Schweitzer spectacles. "Temptation" is seen to refer to a coming state of turmoil. The disciples were not taught to pray 'lead us not to steal the publican's money.' 'Lead us not into the fiery trial' is the true translation. When spoken it was prayer desperate, sad. Men still pray this sad prayer.

The Epilogue assures, that if, because of evil men, war cannot be avoided, even so, Divine Justice will surely come to pass. History is God's memory. He does not forget Ethiopia or Czechoslovakia though justice comes riding on a snail. This Epilogue is earth's jubilant reveille to rouse the soldiers of the Lord. Their cry—victory is with God.

When the Disciples were walking from Canterbury to Westminster (it is good to localize the Gospel) they had an argument who should lead the cabinet when they got the government. Jesus overheard. He reprimanded their ambition but did not say their expectations were wrong. He merely set a child in their midst to show how politicians and bishops ought to serve. On another occasion two disciples tried to get in advance claims to the key posts. Jesus did not correct their misunderstanding. He but said that the honour was not his to award. He was but a servant of God.

The Passion takes on new, sad beauty when this insight is pursued. Judas was appointed to betray to the Sanhedrim the secret that Jesus was Messiah. When he came for trial the high priest asked him "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" And Jesus said, "I am. . . ." * Jesus spoke his own death warrant. These would be the sufferings he would take upon him-

* Mark 14. 61-64.

self that the people might be spared, according to the enlightenment of his time. "Why hast Thou forsaken me?" In this cry of the historic Jesus there are deeps upon deeps, he who penetrates is profoundly moved.

The thousand years of peace did not come. Yet Jesus, by his Sacrifice, lifted the world. Gilbert Murray did not realize the League of Nations, but he did advance the welfare of women and children. John Pounds and Octavia Hill did not bring about a happy England, but they did advance social legislation. Calvary is the tragedy of one who failed to realize the immediate aim yet whose passion for righteousness, personal and social, brought about a good greater than he dreamed. This is the gospel message to all who seem to fail, if their hearts are pure. This is faith.

Criticisms and Questions

If Jesus the judge, as conceived by Michael Angelo, was the local expression of the ruling politics, is the Jesus of Schweitzer but the scholarly reflection of our unquiet century, in its passion to realize the ideal state? If Paul's theory of gradations was the social structure of his period given a religious sanction, may not the future say that Schweitzer too was conditioned by his age? To that judgment we cannot penetrate. As no later artist was able to paint out of the range of the da Vinci shadow, no serious theologian can now ignore the Schweitzer eschatology.

The Apostles humiliated Paul; but time, tender to their piety, little esteems their power of thought. Perhaps Schweitzer's critics are in the Apostolic succession. No one understands Schweitzer's deepened awareness of Jesus until he has read *The Mysticism of Paul*, which has more comment on Jesus than *The Quest* itself: the latter gives little of what Schweitzer feels about Jesus. Again and again, with tropical intensity, his personal devotion to Christ shines through

his writing on Paul. No one is qualified to criticize the Schweitzer understanding of Jesus unless he has read *Paul*. The two books are a double star, each held by the other's gravitation.

One critic, dipping his pen in wormwood, thought it curious that he exuberates over Paul but writes little of Jesus. The iconoclast must read again the "reticence" passages in Bach. Schweitzer writes of Paul but obeys Jesus: he seeks for the historical Jesus, but, touching the theological Christ, he writes as little as he writes of God. Silence tells more than talk.

Aware that one little sacrifice outweighs many volumes on theology, Schweitzer has not written on the experience of Christ. He does not wear his heart upon his sleeve. When iconoclasts suggest his consecration at age twenty-one was too coldly intellectual they overstep modesty. The devoted rarely criticize the devoted.

Schweitzer's view of Christian origins would appear to be that Christianity results from three facts: the life and influence of Jesus, the life and thought of Paul, the memories within the gospels, especially the meditations of John. From these facts in the experience of devout men over many generations came Christianity as known to us.

Those who think Schweitzer's piety is strange should realize that his work on the Jesus of history, when rightly understood, adds to even the Johannine experience as does a work on the life of Wordsworth add to our love of "The Prelude". If ever a scholar will coalesce Schweitzer's teaching and that even greater poem "The Testament of Beauty", he will show where science finds God and the scientist finds Calvary, the latter always the gateway to God. This will be a great hour in our culture.

One complaint is that Schweitzer is not original. It is said he derives his interpretation from Johannes Weiss and owes popularity to the accident of a clever transla-

tion. Great men do not need to be original. His quality of penetrating to the essential thought is alleged to indicate a primitive quality of mind, unable to perceive shades, seeing only black and white. It is said that he passes lightly by other interpretations of the eschatological texts. The biographical solution shows Jesus as holding different ideas at different times, in view of the experiences he underwent. The literary solution explains all eschatological references as poetical outbursts. One sentence must serve as answer. If the New Testament passages which Schweitzer makes sense of, or gives a deeper meaning to, are lined with a blue pencil, much of The Testament is marked.

Another criticism is that Schweitzer's Jesus is the least lovable of all portraits: like Rembrandt's *Carcass of an Ox* it is a masterly presentation of a horrid subject. This dynamic Jesus it is said is a deluded fanatic who thought he would force God to do that which God was not willing to do. Schweitzer anticipated this objection. "The satisfaction which I could not help feeling at having solved so many historical riddles about the existence of Jesus was accompanied by the painful consciousness that this new knowledge in the realms of history would mean unrest and difficulty for Christian piety." * Truth is never a loss.

This Jesus, transcending his century by virtue of ethical passion and devotion to love, is a figure as potent as any earlier understanding of him, to inspire to surrender and to sacrifice. Schweitzer, who discovered this Jesus in the texts, is the first to respond; his devotion may be equalled, never excelled. That Schweitzer's moral heroism is no reason for accepting his view of Jesus we know: but, proving his understanding right, we rejoice that the scholar is a hero of self-sacrifice.

The Schweitzer insight, strangely enough, has been welcomed and reviled by the wrong people in both

* *L. & T.*, p. 65.

instances. Certain Fundamentalists and Catholics have welcomed it as an overthrow of the liberal Jesus because it suggests an El Greco Christ, nearer to dogmatic theology than other recent portrayals—but, whoever else may, *they* cannot welcome it. To have shown that Jesus was limited by his generation, as Caiaphas, Philo, and others, is to have discovered a Jesus who could never be the creator of the Universe, crucified for sin.

Schweitzer has shown that the historic Jesus recedes to a far time. It is the spirit more than the man, the devotee more than the teacher, the poet more than the prophet, whom we must revere and love. That certain liberal Protestants dislike the presentation is strange, for the Jesus of eschatology is more significant than any other of recent inquiry. Their critical approach to the documents dominated Schweitzer. His spirit is their spirit though his discovery is not their discovery. Strange that *they* so dislike the picture of a dynamic Jesus.

To show how the eschatological has influenced subsequent study is not now possible, but all serious theologians consider it, even if they dismiss it as too exclusively concerned with one class of text. Others dismiss the thought because Schweitzer never adequately considers the resurrection. If criticism has been levelled against it, confirmation has not been lacking.

Having proved Jesus a child of his generation can we be assured that piety, once this truth becomes familiar, will continue to feel him the centre and sun of the spiritual life? Anticipating this reasoning, Schweitzer gives his own conviction that Christ-mysticism continues a well of living water, whereas God-mysticism ends as a dry stream. Would this not leave it possible for a Ramakrishna-mysticism, a Bahai-mysticism, or a Schweitzer-mysticism, to be of equal value with Christ-mysticism? Schweitzer would help if he would give a long answer to this difficulty.

It is sometimes suggested that present Christianity is

but a façade behind which a truer world religion is building up. When Loisy has finished the demolition a pure theism will supersede mediated religion. Can we not with quietness say that victory is with Christ till such time as an equally worthy character captures the spiritual imagination?

Religion must be centred in personality. Thus far, heresies lacking a spiritual character at their centre, have lost vitality and passed, even though they served purpose in liberalizing dogma and bigotry. Happily, now, when Christianity is in danger from secular culture, spiritual ennui, and war disillusion, when Marxist and Nazi theories challenge, a new vitality comes, a presentation of Christ and Paul significant to modern feeling. Returning to the Gospels and the Master himself we renew a faith that will long outlive its modern challenges. Christianity still leads the marching generations.

The analysis of the documents by Schweitzer, completion of a long attempt by the church to see Jesus, must never be confused with the work of Loisy, Eisler and others of that ilk. They carve a corpse to show why it died: Schweitzer examines a living tradition to show what is historical. They work in a museum: he serves at an altar.

There remains one serious problem. If Jesus and Paul were ruled by predestination, is it possible for us, lacking this, to realize the same earnestness? Predestination is a dynamic inspiration; not the Stoics but the Christians triumphed. These single-eyed zealots of eschatological passion, the early believers, had an inner compulsion to believe. Not able to share that compulsion, can we equal their devotion? Schweitzer's answer is his own conduct.

The Rebirth of Christianity

The effect of a first knowledge of the Jesus of history is often, on both Fundamentalist and Liberal, that of a

volcanic eruption, destroying with a fierce heat everything once held precious, leaving only a dull dead ash. Yet in time this yields a richer vineyard than flourished before. To those who give time to the Schweitzer study a final insight will come. To experience the Jesus of history as spiritually alive, is vivid as any conversion; it is a spiritual birth with John's Gospel as a birthday card.

This insight so links the historical Jesus with Parliament rather than Canterbury that, when men know the truth, they reject the insight: because they confuse statesman and politician. The statesman obeys duty; the politician serves prudence: the statesman is the mind of the people; the politician is the belly of the public. How else is God's Love Realm to be realized other than through Town Council and Parliament? "None of us can escape history." *

One ruled by mercy, servant of compassion, desiring social good, working for world peace, making sacrifice rather than serving self, such a one is Jesus of Nazareth M.P. Why should this startle? The church rejoices to see Jesus as a carpenter: this insight but discerns new beauty in the Christian vision, for working men follow politics, moved by low motives like the two disciples, or inspired by high motives like Jesus.

In this hour, when the reformation takes its final step, when church life has nearly become a museum piece, Schweitzer restores the faith as a live issue in the factory and the home. As in the middle ages, personal and social religion are brought together but on a higher level of affirmative thought. Armed only by the spirit's flame, with a selfless aim, Jesus established the world's greatest kingdom. Schweitzer shows us this when it was one man and a vision.

In the humdrum and the selfishness of passing politics Jesus set the abiding and the divine of history. He knew

* Lincoln.

that milk and honey as a state subsidy might be necessary, that world government was essential to peace, but he saw, even more clearly, that Man's chief end is to serve righteousness. Social security and world peace are less than a man's soul. Through the Jesus who served his century we glimpse afresh the Christ who rules history. This teaching is but in its beginnings: as perspective was added to painting, as harmony was added to music, now history is joined to mysticism. As Masaccio and Palestrina enriched their arts, Schweitzer has done more for European culture than is yet made manifest.

Today's parallels from yesterday's wisdom must be drawn with care. Jesus would approve the United Nations but would not be on the committee. He would be where distress cries for mercy, where pain cries for relief, where the little peoples long for redemption. Counselling that we take the plank out of our English eye that we see clearly to take the sawdust out of the Russian eye, he would tell the parable of The Good Russian, instructing those within the divine enlightenment to be more than courteous to those in darkness.

Greece and Galilee were but the small laboratories where history tried out as experiments our modern events. The Schweitzer insight brings the gospel into the headlines. One expects more from one's own people, who are nearer to the will of God (John 4. 22). When the Woman of Russia asked if in the Houses of Parliament or in the Kremlin did men now worship the Father, the reply was—the true worship of God is where men sow corn in their enemies' fields, that both may see God.

That Jesus is not lost to us, though he belonged to his own generation, is finely expressed by Canon Streeter: "In virtue of the eschatological hope our Lord and His first disciples found themselves standing, as it were, at the bedside of a dying world. Thus for a whole generation the cloud of lesser interests was rolled away, and

ultimate values and eternal issues stood out before them stark and clear, as never before or since in the history of our race." *

As dislike of eschatology is due to the feeling that if men admit his insight as true they lose the Sermon on the Mount and the parables as amaranthine flowers of eternal religion, we quote Schweitzer's own answer to this needless fear. "Men feared that to admit the claims of eschatology would abolish the significance of Christ's words for our time; and hence there was a feverish eagerness to discover in them any elements that might be considered not eschatologically conditioned. When any sayings were found of which the wording did not absolutely imply an eschatological connection there was great jubilation—these at least had been saved uninjured from the coming debacle.

"But in reality that which is eternal in the words of Jesus is due to the very fact that they are based on an eschatological world-view, and contain the expression of a mind for which the contemporary world with its historical and social circumstances no longer had any existence. They are appropriate, therefore, to any world, for in every world they raise the man who dares to meet their challenge, and does not turn and twist them into meaninglessness, above his world and his time, making him inwardly free, so that he is fitted to be, in his own world and in his own time, a simple channel of the power of Jesus.

"He comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lakeside, He came to those men who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same word: 'Follow thou me!' and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfil for our time. He commands. And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in peace and work, in the toil and the pain which they shall pass through in His fellowship,

* *Foundations.*

and, as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience who He is.” *

In a lovely way Schweitzer brings together the Jesus of history and the Christ of experience. Today, civilized man rarely believes that the man of Galilee was partner with God Eternal in the beforetime. The worm of unbelief is at the core of the orthodox apple. If it is to grip modern men Christianity must be born again. At precisely this crisis we are instructed by the one who finalized Jesus as a man of his century that consecrated service leads to the Johannine gospel: we do the deeds, we know the doctrine. Whereas the church stops at Nicaea, Schweitzer leads us to Jerusalem. Today, Christianity must be founded, not on a myth, that Jesus died for sin, but on history, that Jesus died for men.

* *Quest*, p. 400.

REVERENCE FOR LIFE

Adventures in Thought

WHY should I be good? How do I become a good man? Is the good in me the product of social righteousness or does the goodness in me elevate the state? Is goodness concerned only with character or should it lead to social service? What is civilization? Why am I in the world? Whence is my life tending? If I may know God, does God know me? These are elemental questions, asked when people reflect upon the deeper issues of life.

Schweitzer insists that men should think. Nothing should be accepted contrary to reason. He requires that men should will to do the right. In order to know the right, men must think. The ethic of reverence for life is Schweitzer's answer to the questions men ask when they take a long walk in the country.

The power of thought is incalculable. Hitler wrote *My Fight*, Schweitzer wrote *Civilization and Ethics*. Consider Hitler, poisoning the arteries of Europe, massacring thousands, bringing upon himself Isaiah's grim judgment:

The Lord hath broken the sceptre of the tyrant,
Who smote the peoples in fury with blow upon blow,
Who trampled the nations in wrath, with relentless oppression.
How art thou fallen from heaven O Lucifer, son of morning!
How art thou struck to the ground who didst lay low the
nations!

Thou didst say in thine heart, I will mount up to heaven;
Above the laws of God will I set up my throne;
But to Sheol instead thou art hurled, to the depths of the pit.
Thou hast ruined thy land and slain thy people.*

* Isaiah 14.

But time marches on: the slow rhythms of history bring goodness to an enduring triumph. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." * Taking upon himself the guilt of the white man toward the Negro, making restitution through healing for the suffering an earlier generation had inflicted upon Africa, Schweitzer writes his wisdom that men may be guided toward goodness, if they will but heed. "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, and he shall bear the burden of their guilt." †

Aware that the truth about the gospels might be hurtful to sincere believers who did not grasp his thought, the passion for truth triumphed: Schweitzer wrote as he discovered. Not all readers find devotional joy in the Jesus he presents: not all can sense the mystical inspiration he himself experiences. According to the Gospels Jesus is too markedly a prisoner to the thought of his generation to dominate our intellectual life, though he remains an abiding exemplar, and mediates God as no other has power.

Though in mystical communion with the historical Jesus, and gaining from this a vital strength, Schweitzer felt the urgent need for a belief not dependent on revelation, a belief native to, springing from, present experience. His theological work completed, driven to Africa by the spirit that was in Jesus, he continued his search for such a belief, a search for a moral compulsion which would be an inspiration and a guide to modern people.

The ethic which he thought out he deems more adequate for modern needs than the ethical system held by other thinkers. All significant values of spiritual experience are within it. Even so he does not desire that it will be accepted without question. Men should think. When a man thinks, hell trembles.

This ethic is his supreme work. If Swedenborg,

* Rom. 5. 19.

† Isaiah 53. 11.

honoured as an engineer in his life, is remembered as a mystic, Schweitzer, now honoured as musician and theologian, will be remembered as ethical thinker. Whether he will rank as the Copernicus of ethical thought cannot be known. This is tomorrow's secret. If only those who feel the strangeness of his dynamic Jesus, would allow his ethical thinking to become thought of their thought they would feel the spirit of his Jesus.

If philosophy springs from astonishment whereas religion springs from affliction, if philosophy is an answer to curiosity whereas religion is an answer to anxiety, if philosophy interests only the mind whereas religion engages the whole man, if, as von Hugel maintains, "Philosophy can but analyse and clarify the religious conviction whereas Religion furnishes man with a vivid and concrete experience and conviction of permanent ethical and spiritual value," Schweitzer is ever a religious thinker. He would deepen the spiritual life of man and improve civilization.

The qualities of the prophets repeat themselves in him. He is sombrely realistic as Jeremiah: sweeping in his historical judgments as Isaiah: severe in his condemnation as Amos: impatient for the kingdom as Daniel: tender and gracious as Hosea. Always he is a prophet. His work bears the mark of what some think is confusion, but it is only the haste of an earnest man writing to men in a desperate situation. He sees Europe in flames: he fears that the fire may rage with fiercer intensity over wider areas, as indeed it has since he wrote. His ethic is a call to the fire brigade.

Civilization and Ethics is his Pilgrim's Progress, his quest of the historic ethic. The book is not light reading, and in its present form can interest only serious readers, yet it is seldom "technical": it does demand time but it does not require a college education. In appearance it is a critical survey of ethical thinkers from Socrates to

William James, in fact it is modern man searching for the Holy Grail. For the reason certain philosophers criticize, others love; it is passionate, sincere, obviously the work of an earnest nature. It is important, for "this generation has a rendezvous with destiny." *

Civilization is in grave danger. Schweitzer sees men as mice running from the hawk, citizens fleeing to air-raid shelters. He is gloomy concerning his own age, a period of spiritual decadence. Men do not think deeply: we are mere camp followers, Epigoni to a great age. We deceive ourselves, mistaking mastery of externals for true inwardness: our philosophy is journalism. The strain of modern life leaves a man no time for self-collectedness: he seeks diversion rather than instruction. Cruelty is practised: liberty is lost: superstition comes to life.

Our time is so organized that men are not spiritually free: the state, by no means to advantage, replaces individual effort: during the war, propaganda murdered the truth. The civilized states are really barbarian: much of our culture is a dress shirt. Men are shallow. Counsel for the prosecution has a strong case. He never gives to our generation credit that it has produced Schweitzer, Howard Somervell, Ceresol, Grenfell, and many many others.

As against this turpitude, this weakness, there was power and vitality in the eighteenth century. Reason was respected and obeyed. Religion was then founded on reason: the churches were influenced by reason: a belief in God, virtue, and immortality was put forward as the belief of a rational man. It was an age of tolerance: persecution of witchcraft was abolished. In the common mind the idea of internationalism grew: a sense of law developed that still dominates thought.

The Declaration of the Rights of Man, ideas of freer trade were expounded: inhuman colonization was con-

* Roosevelt.

demned. Better houses were built. So keen were the people, innumerable private societies were formed to promote the moral and utilitarian progress of mankind. If the eighteenth century fails in its worthy ambition it is only because its thought was too far in advance of the people. Lord Shaftesbury and Goethe represent this golden age, which abolished slavery, the last great act of a great age.

Thinking and religion were soon to part: the active will-to-progress was soon to be smothered in Hegelian accepting of, rather than making history. You must merely observe, register progress, not strive to effect it; this type of thought led to Karl Marx, then to Spengler. This last urges that only patience is possible: civilization is a cycle of birth, development, disintegration, determined as the life of any plant.

This teaching is popular because men have lost their ethical powers of resistance, they feel themselves helpless. Schweitzer's analysis of decay is severe. His persuasion that, despite our hard work, for we are no lazy people, we are reprobate, is like John the Baptist denouncing the Pharisees. Saying this about the gloom that was Spengler what would he say about the horror that is Sartre?

His esteem of the eighteenth century is a weak argument: fortunately, his ethic is in no way affected by this judgment: but the eulogy does appear to justify the criticism that his historical analysis is akin to his theological scheme, a drawing in black and white, lacking in shades, failing to list the evils which then prevailed.

Our thought is that the centuries are like children, different, but the cautious historian has no favourites. The good have such failings and the bad reveal such virtues. The eighteenth imprisoned the publisher of Paine's *Age of Reason*, its morals were strange, it knew corruption in politics, and it swore hard. In the end there is no absolute history: there is only the present

looking backward. One is apt to find what one looks for. If Schweitzer's discovery of errors in Bach never lessened his appreciation, disagreement as to the eighteenth or the twentieth centuries need not affect our acceptance of his ethical imperative.

Even if the judgment that this century is decadent is open to question there is so much truth in his analysis of what is wrong that we can follow him in his inquiries, What can a man believe? Why am I in the world? What will give reason for and impulse to good conduct?

Pilgrim of Eternity

In his thinking Schweitzer is elemental, simple, profound. Because he is a religious thinker answering a need, rather than a philosopher, he considers difficulties which the thoughtful person can consider with profit. Many philosophers can be read only by the college-trained: the arcana of their craft are beyond all but the initiated. With Schweitzer it is otherwise: the essential portions of his ethical writing may be read by all: chapter twenty-one of *Civilization and Ethics* is challenging, profound and clear.

Following his Baconian method, in seeking to answer, what shall a man believe? he ranges over history to inquire: what has been believed? He appraises value and examines weakness. He considers, what was the effect of the prevalent philosophy upon civilization? This satisfactorily concluded, he states his own convictions, with supporting reasons.

Though his ethic is our journey's end we will speed over the long way which he laboriously walked as he searched for the place where the plain man finds God and science finds beauty. We summarize the features of the world religions and western thinkers as he analyses their attitudes to spiritual experience and social issues.

We must understand his categories. He distinguishes sharply between a *theory of the cosmos*—a system of

thought which includes within itself evil, the natural world, the cosmic system and man, and a *life philosophy*—a human insight which makes clear to man what his duty is. This latter does not solve the riddle of existence, but gives to man courage and inspiration. The former is a complete set of theological answers, the latter is a fragmentary human answer to the question, What is man, is God mindful of him?

He distinguishes optimistic from pessimistic religion. “*A religion is optimistic* if it represents the conviction that the forces at work in the natural world have their origin in a perfect primal force, which leads all things towards perfection through a natural development. *A religion is pessimistic* if it cannot conceive the forces at work in the world of sense as the expression of divine goodness and perfection. It therefore does not rest its hopes on possibilities of development within this physical world, but looks beyond into the world of pure spiritual being.”*

Religions may be monistic or dualistic. “*A religion is monistic* if it considers God to be the sum-total of all the forces at work in the universe and therefore believes that in the knowledge of the universe we can attain to perfect knowledge of God. Thus in its very nature, monism is Pantheistic.”† “*A religion is dualistic* if it does not make any attempt to arrive at a full knowledge of the nature of God by examining the forces which are active in the natural world, but seeks to realize Him in accordance with the ideal conceptions of Him that we carry within us.”‡

Schweitzer is an optimistic dualist whose philosophy of life “anticipates and will guide our growth. Science compels movement: but the direction our movement takes depends on our creative thinkers.”§ He is a creative thinker. Acutely aware that in explaining his thought we may do it wrong, aware that in using simple

* *C. & R.W.*, p. 35. - † *ibid.*, p. 36. ‡ *ibid.*, p. 36.

§ Selincourt.

words for his technical terms we may change his meanings, we try to explain his human insight, which is hopeful concerning the natural goodness that is in man. He never thinks of man as a lost sinner though he sees him as a lonely person wondering why, in a friendly universe, there are sharks, earthquakes, even cosmic convulsions, all indifferent to his survival.

Indian and Chinese Religion

“Where is wisdom to be found, and where is the place of understanding?” * In his search for wisdom he examines first the world religions. Schweitzer is a Christian convinced that the Christian ideals have within them an ethical urgency not naturally within other world religions. In study and comparison he quotes the ideals, not the state of the civilization. Though convinced that Christian ideals are more realized in western social life than the ideals of other religions are realized in other civilizations he excludes this possible argument in favour of Christianity. In estimating another religion he will take its finest expressions, the written ideals.

What power has the ideal to influence ethical life? He is not interested in religions as if they were answers to a riddle: always his concern is—how will religion influence ethical conduct? Strictly judicial, he is not dispassionate: giving all possible courtesy, he has a fixed criterion: does the ideal within the religion intensify the spiritual experience of the devotee? Does the ideal fire the devotee to create a better world? He combines Baxter and Cromwell: not only does he preach as a dying man to dying men, he preaches as a dying citizen to a dying civilization.

Brahmanism and Buddhism he describes as pessimistic monism: they do not conceive the forces at work in the world as expressive of divine goodness, but look beyond

* Job 28. 12.

to a world of pure spiritual being. God is thought to be "an absolute lifeless spirituality." Brahmanism emphasizes that all is one. Even the gods are contained in being. Man frees himself by rising to a state where desire and sympathy do not further trouble him. Asceticism and self-torture aid the elimination of the will-to-live. The advice of the sages is, retire to the forest and die. Buddhism, more practical, therefore more compassionate, has the same thought, it is good to enter a passionless state.

As a theory of the cosmos, explaining life's mystery, an explanation which includes within itself evil, the natural world, the cosmic system, and man, Schweitzer is critical of the "I know" attitude of Brahmanism. The eastern tendency to reduce mystery to knowledge is not pleasing to him: he deems this presumption and prefers Christian humility which says of the mystery "that we know in part." Religion should not claim to explain all mystery. Though never mentioning karma and re-incarnation, this is a "knowing" explanation: failure of nerve gives such theory its power.

Not impressed by their metaphysic his criticism of the ethical outcome of Brahmanism is severe. In the Bhagavadgita (always he criticizes the expressed ideals, not the social practice), when Arjuna hesitates to enter the battle against his own relatives, and pauses to ask advice from the divine Krishna because he feels that it will be a sin to fight, instead of the god urging that he must fight to preserve civilization, guilt which as a ruler he cannot escape, the god leads off into discussion on the predetermined character of all that must happen. There is no urge to ethical action in this. Quietism as an ideal is even more pronounced in the Dhammapadam, which contains no discussion of family and social relationships.

To the striving man Indian religion would say, having nearly realized Nirvana, strive to think only of a world of

pure spirituality: do not contaminate yourself with interest in passing affairs. On occasion it even regards the spiritual as above and beyond the ethical, whereas, in effective contrast, Christianity emphasizes that the spiritual and the ethical are one and the same. The Christian is only truly mystical when he is actively working for the kingdom. An Indian mystic disciplined to overcome desire can, only to the extent that he is inconsistent, engage in social service.

Schweitzer's sharpest criticism is directed against one aspect of Buddhist thought, that its highest ethic was an aim of perfection for the monks, not a way of life for peasants and weavers. Frequently their Scripture ends with the phrase "every monk was satisfied and delighted with the words of the Exalted One." The injunctions, the discipline, were for men of leisure. He hastens to add, this is not to condemn the Buddha: that only professionals could realize the highest beatitude was so deeply the thought of that time it was not to be expected that Gautama could, in this respect, rise above the thought limitations of his age.

If not sufficient credit is given to the social urge of modern reform movements in India, the lack is probably due to his conviction that they derive their social urge from Christianity. Nearly all Indian social sense dates from Raja Ram Mohun Roy who was profoundly affected by Western Christianity. The condemnation of caste by Kabir led to no social change. Though only a shadow of the ethical survives in Indian thinking, as Schweitzer interprets it, he is appreciative of the collectedness given to personal character by the discipline and mediation enjoined.

As his own religion is an equal emphasis on a redemptive experience and a social gospel, he requires of every other religion that it produce profound and permanent incentives to the inward perfecting of personality and inspire to strenuous ethical activity. Indian religion is

strong concerning personal redemption but has little to say as to a social conscience.

An erudite criticism of this point of view, by Radhakrishnan in *Eastern Religion and Western Thought*, should be read. To read them both is to live through a battle of the intellectual giants, carried forward without rancour. Privileged to visit the Brahmo Samaj in India we feel that even if Schweitzer's criticism is true, the moment is not opportune for the West to say where the East is wrong. It would be wise for the East to be more reticent concerning its spirituality.

The noblest people in both lands are much alike. We have our private mind but feel that negative judgments, even where true, should not be publicized. A gentler day will come when people will be less touchy. East and West may then criticize each other without offence. As Radhakrishnan appreciates Schweitzer's African service and Schweitzer appreciates the Brahmo Samaj, the Ramkrishna Mission and the Servants of India, let us work on our mutual appreciations.

In the course of discussion between C. F. Andrews and Schweitzer, the former urged that though judgment might be true as founded on the documents he felt in India itself a spirit sympathetic to social reform. With frankness Schweitzer answered, "You have lived with the Indians, I have only read about them, your judgment is perhaps the truer."

If one contrasts the lives of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, "the whitest spot on a white space," * and Dr. Albert Schweitzer, first edition of our new humanity, East and West are to be seen, each at their best: contemplation come to a second Benares in the vision of the Indian boy, sacrifice come to a second Jerusalem in the vow of the European youth. The Indian vision sees that "a divine order already exists. The society of just men made perfect is an eternal fact of nature." The

* G. J. Souvenir.

European vision sees life's immemorial pain and seeks humbly to take away one hour of suffering from the lowly and the poor.

Schweitzer is more sympathetic toward Taoism, classified as monistic optimism: monistic, it understands God to be "the mere sum-total of the forces at work in the world"; optimism, it is convinced that the forces of the natural world are good and themselves lead to perfection through natural development. Because optimistic, Chinese ethics are more practical than Hindu: that Chinese thought never emphasizes celestial punishment or reward but requires that men shall do right because of an inner compulsion, appeals to him.

The appreciation of the sublime in natural forces, achieving their labour with little apparent effort, to the likeness of which we should strive, with which we should enter into communion, also appeals to him. His criticism is that monistic thought leads more to resignation than to action: ethics demand a dualistic faith.

Love Demands the Loving Deed

Searching with zest for a life philosophy, seeking answer to the question, how can I think of myself as flesh and blood and as soul and will, what will stir me deeply to make the best of myself, what will stir men to continuing good conduct, with these questions not answered to his satisfaction in eastern religions, Schweitzer approaches European philosophy.

For reasons theoretical or practical, he has deemed the eastern systems not adequate as guides to the higher life. This judgment he also applies to mediaeval theology which rarely acknowledges that the forces at work in nature, alligators and sisters of mercy, are so different from what one would expect in a world created by a perfect creative will. Mediaevalism can neither guide nor inspire modern man.

His twofold demand of religion, that it will mediate a personal experience and inspire to social service, is his criterion of value. The twofold nature of religion as viewed by Schweitzer is easily kept in mind by the cross. On the horizontal we reach out to men by the right hand, to animals by the left hand: in the vertical, we are rooted in nature and reach toward heaven. "Civilization" is the sense of sin, the longing for holiness, oneness with nature and awe before The Eternal. "Ethics" is moral obedience and social service, "responsibility without limit toward all that lives." *

Neither is perfect, lacking the other. He esteems fallacious the view that the energy given to perfecting the world is better given to perfecting the individual. He is western: service to the community is part of religion. Christianity, in its simplest and most intelligible form, he considers the noblest of the world religions.

Still engaged on search for a reason why we should be good, a reason which needs no outside supports, a reason holding within itself the noblest demands we can think of, he reviews the systems of western ethical thinkers. Significant as may have been their earnestness, valiant as may have been their strivings, no one—as he understands the need—has discovered a compelling reason why modern man should be good.

A principle not dependent on a theory of the cosmos, a principle that will lead all things to perfection through natural development, a principle which does not deny the value of this present world, a principle which contains within itself an ethical urgency, a principle not dependent on incarnation, infallible scripture or karma, a principle which will make intelligible the mystery of life and give strength to continue steadfast in well-doing, to discover this basic principle of morality is his quest.

* *Civilization and Ethics*, p. 248.

From Athens to Königsberg

Of the Greek and Roman thinkers, Schweitzer is in deepest sympathy with the late Stoics. Their insistence upon ethics and their reticence concerning explanations of mystery please him. Their teaching that nature has in some mysterious way grounded the ethical in the nature of things is his own conviction. What is ethical, and what is good for the people, are one.

The Stoic emphasis upon the value of the individual attracts him: that they lived and wrote in a decadent period commends them to him. Stoic thought was the winter seed of a coming civilization. His criticism of their faith is that it remained the possession of the élite. As against the early Christian renunciation of this world the Stoic's brave acceptance of the natural order as the possible spiritual is sensible. Early Christian wine in Stoic jars would be the right spirit in a perfect form.

In his book he leaps from the Roman period into the Renaissance. This has been criticized as not legitimate in a history of ethical thought, for so conspicuously to ignore the mediaeval period is to shout oneself a Protestant: but he is so sturdy an individualist that the required thinking of the Roman Church could have little appeal. Scholasticism is so foreign to his approach it is understandable he ignores the system. Their slighting of the natural world is repugnant to him, as is their pessimism touching all things human.

Once the modern world is entered, so he affirms, discovery and invention give rise to an enthusiasm that changes the old-time pessimism concerning the natural order to a zestful optimism. This sudden optimism resultant from a physical triumph over nature must be deepened to a true optimism, grounded in thought, a more sure foundation.

Like tourists who do Europe in a week, we must pass

by his long enquiry into European thought: we have no time for this. We glance at judgment on two of the leading thinkers shocked that as he had, with genius, to compress their works into a chapter, we, with only good intentions, must compress his compression into a paragraph.

Spinoza's system is described as monistic, like Chinese thought. Everything, nature, animals, man, is within God, moved by necessity: a beautiful vision but cold, "stiff as an icebound landscape." * Man achieves happiness when, aware he is flesh and blood, he surrenders himself to the vast cosmic forces, and so rises to spirituality. This leads to a view which, in theory, practically abolishes action: its chief value is that every relation is seen as a relation to the universe, and this gives dignity to human life: the serenity of the stars informs the life: conduct is guided by reason: no credit is taken for righteous service: these are the fruits of this spirit. Enthusiasm, sympathy, hatred are absent from the serenity of the man who lives within this thought. Its weakness is that it leads to resignation rather than to active devotion.

Deeply appreciative of Kant's argument that ethics is a power that lifts us out of selfishness, frees us from the ape and the tiger within, and links us to heaven, he is drawn to the Kantian imperative that our motive to moral conduct must be a purely inward compulsion. But he does not feel that Kant establishes, as absolutely binding, a principle of conduct that would cover all ethical duties. One criticism is that Kant restricts immediate ethical duty to relations of man to man, whereas the true ethic, so he urges, must embrace even the relationship of man to animals, flowers, even the non-living—an icicle for instance.

As an elemental thinker writing for seriously minded people who desire to deepen their spiritual experience,

* *C. & E.*, p. 116.

Schweitzer is chiefly interested in willing, what shall a man do? Life is an act then a thought: in the beginning was the deed. Secondly, he is interested in feeling, how shall a man enter into life? He ignores ultimates. "Ethics can let space and time go hang." *

In his book he examines the thoughts of thirty-two other thinkers: he states their ethic, evaluates and shows the inadequacy. He concludes that no earlier thinker has formulated the basic principle of the moral—that which will be a necessity of thought. This was to be his own work. Whereas, before, men were as sailors guided by the stars, now they have in his ethic, a compass, controlled from a magnetic pole.

Whether later generations will approve his certainty, rank him as his earnestness persuades him that he is, the Newton of morality, for the first time giving name and recognition to a law that governs all conduct, if moral history will henceforward be written with more lucidity as a consequence of "Reverence for Life" cannot be known to us. That he has rendered service is certain. If Whitehead is the Aristotle of the generation, Schweitzer is the Socrates. One critic has argued he is in no way the equal of Heraclitus, Aristotle, Leibnitz and Locke: what of it? These are but the rulers temporal, he is of the lords spiritual.

That eschatology, for which he is famous, has frightened many is unfortunate: because of this, people are unwilling to listen to his simple message, the Gospel for Today. That his greatest work, his ethical thought, is not adequately recognized, is the experience of the master repeating itself in the disciple. Bach was recognized only as an organist during his lifetime; his generation thought little of him as a composer, indeed preferred the Passion by Frobisher to the St. Matthew Passion. Likewise, Schweitzer, recognized only as a theologian, will be remembered as an ethical teacher.

* *C. & E.*, p. 225.

The Divine Reticence

Some normal incentives to the good life are not brought into his system. A pathetic confession is, "without hope of heaven life is vain." This is to deny life and its beauty: but that sincerity sanctifies, this view is crude. Schweitzer does not deny personal immortality but he desires that the ethical shall be established apart from such expectation.

He would esteem as unworthy "if my religion is not true I've missed an awful lot." He would approve the Sufi mystic "O God! if I worship Thee for fear of Hell, send me to Hell; and if I worship Thee in hopes of Paradise, withhold Paradise from me: but if I worship Thee for Thine own sake, then withhold not from me the Eternal Beauty."

This important reticence must be considered. God and immortality are not used by him as reasons why men should be good. "He is more or less Kantian in the belief that ethics can stand without any support from metaphysics." * To establish an ethic not founded on personal immortality, founded rather on an inspiring trust in the natural goodness of human nature, is, in a theologian, an act of rare spiritual courage. Is aught more derogatory to man than the mistrust of the craven-hearted believers in original sin gloomily persuaded that men will degenerate once this sureness is lost?

As if Stoics, Hegelians and Communists did not give their fears the lie. Emerson had right: "The moment the doctrine of the immortality is separately taught, man is already fallen." † Mediaeval religion once taught that the second of the seven joys of the righteous dead would be witnessing the torment of the damned. Religion can be too talkative.

In this reticence, Schweitzer differs from Paul, who wrote, "if our hope is vain then are we of all men most

* Russell.

† *The Oversoul.*

miserable.” * Schweitzer writes that by helping where help is needed, we link ourselves in a spiritual inwardness with the God of Love. In this way we give worth and meaning to little lives. We give value to life from within. We create it: value is not imposed upon us. The beautiful word, immortality, is set where silence speaks of God. The greatness of a preacher can be best measured by what he refrains from saying that we may the better hear God Eternal speak to us in secrecy.

He addresses himself to problems which enter all serious conversation, such as, would men respect morality and continue ethical if they felt that the universe was indifferent to them? Yes, answers Schweitzer: he does not use a friendly universe as a possible support to his ethic for, to him, all optimistic interpretations of the universe which assume that it is specially favourable to man, that man is its favourite child, are gratuitous.

Concerning this he is explicit. The meaning of human life cannot be found in any purposiveness in the universe. He does not deny that the cosmos has purpose: he merely acknowledges frankly the obvious facts: that we are but men on one of the least of heavenly bodies. “Any lowering or raising of the temperature of the earth, any change in the composition of the atmosphere” † and our life is over. Single instances of purposiveness are never fused by nature into a collective purpose: cosmic accident may at any time wreck a planet. “We understand nothing of the physical world, must admit that we are surrounded by enigmas.” ‡

That goodness is made dependent on a universe with a special interest in men, that ethics are tied to a universe friendly to human purposes, is, as he considers the matter, a theoretical weakness whatever may be its practical value. Nature is magnificent in her destructiveness as she is magnificent in her creativeness. What

* 1 Cor. 15. 19.

† *C. & E.*, p. 207.

‡ *ibid.*, p. 208.

is man? A leaf on the wind, or a creator of truth, beauty, goodness?

He does not say that the universe is hostile, nor that it is indifferent. He merely refuses to say it is friendly: he will not have belief in its friendliness as a guarantee of or incentive to goodness. So often the silence of a service is more pregnant than the sermon. Many people do profess too much.

What right have we to say that man is a perfect expression of being whereas elephants, hollyhocks and icicles are less worth while. If man is a thinking reed, what of the dog? How can we be certain that in man the universe comes to a finer climax than in horse or elephant? How can we be sure that in arrogating superiority to ourselves we are not "making the mistake of raising a distinction between different methods, into a distinction between degrees of perfection"?

It is a searching question. As with a surgical needle he probes to find the vital artery of the African arm, that intravenous injection may cure the patient who would otherwise die of sleeping sickness, so he searches for the artery of European faith, that he may inject into the dying civilization a life-giving inspiration. The probing may be painful.

Intellectual inquiry proves that a human view need not be tied to a cosmic outlook. Our human hope is not confirmed by the cosmos: we must frankly acknowledge this pessimistic conclusion.

Yet there is no call to despair. Not even when worse facts are faced. That the spiritual is so pitifully dependent on the physical, that the spiritual can be overwhelmed by insanity, that volcanoes destroy men and vineyards without discrimination, these, the facts of reflective thought, need not cause us to despair and in suicide throw life from us because it is so miserable. There is in us a will-to-live which asserts itself. Even while pessimists of the judgment we continue optimists

of the will. This realism, stimulating as it may be, is not chill denial, it is a divine reticence, a fear lest too much be spoken, aware that, in the end, silence only can speak of God.

The Ethic of Reverence for Life

Thought tends to become complex. "In the beginning is the deed": this is the start. Then follows the record of what happened; wonder elaborates the story, subtlety perceives new meanings, last stage of all, diligence systematizes. Suddenly there is a return to the simple, the elemental.

An Old Testament illustration will serve. A simple agricultural necessity, one in seven as a day of rest, became an elaborate code of laws, subject to subtle interpretation, highly systematized. Long afterwards, when law had become burdensome, Jesus penetrated to the heart of Pharisaic subtlety and spoke two simple commandments. Likewise, Gautama seized on the essentials of Brahmanic subtlety announcing four simple truths and an eightfold path.

So also Schweitzer has reduced modern theology and metaphysic to its true simplicity—Reverence for Life. A number of students were taken into a room and asked to describe all that they saw, but only one of them mentioned the light. Schweitzer perceives the light.

Before we state this simplicity, this light that Schweitzer saw, it is good to observe the deed give birth to the thought. Life is an act then a thought, a goodness then an ethic. He came to his enlightenment when aged forty-two: but before this he had made The Threefold Sacrifice and worked in Africa. His ethic, much as he deems it the product of hard thinking, is the consequence of practical service: his life gives vitality and power to his word.

When Paul was translated to the third heaven, the ecstasy gave to him his assurance. So when Schweitzer was travelling on the Ogowe, passing through a herd of

hippopotami, there came the illumination which gave to him his gospel and his assurance. The phrase "reverence for life" and the redemptive power within it, is the translation into our writing of an experience not of this world. He transcended space and time, entered the presence, where a message was given to him. He visited the New Jerusalem, chapter twenty-one is his letter to the Corinthians.

He writes for all serious-minded citizens who would serve more faithfully, who would dedicate to The Master life and passion without reserve or prudence: to such his message is addressed. As they give heed they note three characteristics of his ethic. It is not dependent on any understanding that the external cosmos is favourable to man. Service must be the expression of an inward compulsion, realizing itself in sacrifice, without hope of reward or fear of punishment. A man must give himself in devotion to men, animals, insects, when these enter the circle of his life needing his help.

By what reasoning does he arrive at this simplicity that is the heart of the gospel? Though the key phrase was given to him as an illumination, in his effort to establish his ethic by reason, he asks, what is the most elemental fact of consciousness known to us? So far as we can enter into their mind, what is the simplest awareness experienced by animals, insects, plants?

He gives answer, the will-to-live. This that is the life urge, the primal, the elemental, this that is dominant in men, is evident in all forms of life; this is the core of life. This urge, this élan, this life force, is blind yet powerful: it is its own justification, acting before it reflects. How it came to be, if it will ever cease to be, creation and destiny, are irrelevant: it *is*. "So far as I observe the universal, the creative life realizes itself in me, in form other than it realizes itself elsewhere: more I do not know." *

* *C. & E.*, p. 249.

When a man sits down to think about things, when a man asks why he should be good when to be bad is often pleasant and profitable, in such hour of quiet, lonely reasoning Schweitzer comes to share his wonderings. Life is so odd, so tremendous a mystery, that men often cease to worry about it. Schweitzer urges that they pursue thought beyond this first weariness. The cosmos is so vast it seems difficult to say that man is its child and care. A slight change in the planetary orbit, much less a disturbance in the sun, and our little life is ended.

This leads Schweitzer to renounce all teaching that man is nature's pet child. He will be religious, but only after he has looked fixedly on fact. So he renounces cosmic optimism and dares to be a Daniel in a den of worse lions than ever existed when the world was very young. Now that we are come to the manhood of science we must gird ourselves as men, now that we are come to cosmic knowledge we must put away fables. This astringency will appeal to the courageous.

Meditating in calm, clear, scientific manner that the universe apparently has no special interest in us, seeing no cosmic evidence for the love of God, Schweitzer asks, what is at the centre of things? there he finds will-to-live in the midst of will-to-live, quite selfish. This is simple. Schweitzer's thought is equally for the thoughtful peasant and the scarlet-robed professor.

The world is "a ghastly drama of animal rending animal, one will-to-live destroying the other. Why it is so ordered is a mystery. Why I experience reverence in so fearful a holocaust is a painful enigma. I can only formulate this elemental meditation in this sentence: 'I am life which wills to live, in the midst of life which wills to live.' " * This experience is brought to reflection every time I ask, what meaning has life?

From this fearsome contemplation which frightened

* *C. & E.*, p. 249.

Job, from this awed awareness that challenged Paul, from this gazing into the gloom of starless space, Schweitzer turns to do the deeds of mercy, finding as he so serves, Reverence for Life.

His struggle for faith is in Bunyan's and Luther's hymns: but the fighting there is with giants and ancient foes. It is a more desperate fight—in our Copernican world—to battle with laws and forces that have no apparent interest in the pygmy who dares challenge their ascendancy.

In one jump Schweitzer leaves will-to-live in the midst of will-to-live and reaches to "Reverence for Life." There is no bridge here: not even Schweitzer builds one. Be this as it may, Schweitzer took his flight into "Reverence for Life." This was the moment of his enlightenment. A good man is never denied his vision; Schweitzer had his answer. Life was made plain. He knew why he must be good, he had overcome the apparent indifference of the physical universe. He had struggled through cosmic pessimism to personal optimism.

He is content to accept the antinomy that in the natural world God is revealed as mysterious, marvellous, creative force whereas in ourselves we experience God as personality, as ethical will. These two, the God of the observing intellect and the God of the sensitive heart, do not coincide, yet are mysteriously coexistent. Thus God and nature stand contrasted. The God worshipped is an ethical personality while the universe bears no ethical character. There is no bringing together of cosmic and ethical thought: there is only an illustration.

"Let me express it in a simile. There is an ocean—cold water without motion. In this ocean, however, is the Gulf Stream, hot water, flowing from the equator towards the Pole. Inquire of all scientists how it is physically imaginable that a stream of hot water flows between the waters of the ocean, which, so to speak, form its banks, the moving within the motionless, the hot

within the cold: no scientist can explain it. Similarly there is the God of love within the God of the forces of the universe—one with Him, and yet so totally different. We let ourselves be seized and carried away by that vital stream.” *

His readiness to acknowledge that nature as a system of law, and God as ethical personality, cannot be brought together, separates him from most theologians persuaded that God the Universal and God the Father are one and the same. His God of love is less than natural law: if nature, so careful of the type heedless of the one, if animals, domestic or vicious, if plants, wheat or tares, if men, good or bad, if all creation is likened to a cathedral, his God of love is the altar contained therein: less than the whole, giving atmosphere to the whole, but not powerful to order the whole after its own mind.

This frankness, which exalts him above the average theologian determined to have a universe within a dogma, does not hesitate to criticize as inadequate the cosmic optimism of his century which Jesus shared: it looked forward to the perfected world as a result of a catastrophic end to human history. This view we cannot share. This judgment judges only credal Christianity in so far as it keeps artificially alive dead ideas: his response to Jesus as a life-giving power is another consideration.

When in silence I meditate upon this awareness of the will-to-live, the part of me I share with the ape and the tiger, quietly and silently this natural selfishness loses its grossness as it becomes reverence for life. As a snowdrop pushing blindly upward exfoliates into white loveliness after it has reached to light, air and fresh blowing wind, so this will-to-live, an elemental force, is changed even as it emerges from the dark primeval and becomes reverence, a spiritual reality that moderates the elemental struggle. Grace imposes itself upon nature.

* *C. & R.W.*, p. 78.

Given this reverence for the life within, it is an easy progress, led by Schweitzer, to reverence for the lives without: inward vision gives place to outward looking, personal redemption gives rise to social service: the ethic of self-perfection leads to the ethic of devotion. The insight which sanctifies our life becomes consecration that we may help other life: from illumination we pass to service, from Damascus we go to Corinth, from Strassburg to Lambaréné.

Think before you Act

This reasoning which leads from the will-to-live to reverence for life, then afterwards to limitless responsibility, when translated into everyday conduct may demand that you appear sentimental for love's sake. This must not be shirked. To save an animal, to save an insect, to save a flower, is a moral obligation. That it is a duty to save human life was long ago granted by the moral sense, but this reverence lays upon us the obligation to be wide in our sympathy.

Happily, regard for animals is spreading but, a useful service, this ethic gives moral foundation to deepening tendencies. "In ignorant ages it was common to vaunt the human superiority by underrating the instinct of other animals: but a better discernment finds that the difference is only of less and more." * "How beautiful is life which none may give but all may take away." †

Any extension of ethical feeling appears strange but there is no going back. As we have learned that animals have their rights we now realize that insects and flowers have their rights: it is as sinful to pluck a primrose as to kill a horse, as sinful to destroy a moth as to trap a bird, *unless a higher purpose gives sanction to the act*. This last qualification makes the exaggeration legitimate. Even a flower has a life of its own. Significantly enough this

* Anon.

† Buddha.

ethic is in tune with the scientific findings of Sir Jagadiz Bose; it has the spirit of Wordsworth, "'tis my faith that every flower enjoys the air it breathes."

When a thoughtful youth first grasps this ethic he instantly says, but the Eskimoes cannot live on nuts, we cannot live on the fragrance of the air, nor like tulips draw nurture from the light, nature imposes killing upon us: and, should we reverence weeds, mosquitoes, crocodiles? To this, the ethic replies, it is moral to sacrifice life when necessity compels: but necessity, and necessity alone, renders moral the sacrifice of life.

The farmer who has mown a thousand flowers in his meadow to feed his cows has destroyed life; necessity justifies him: but he must not on his way home thoughtlessly strike off the head of a single flower by the roadside, for this would be a wrong against life. The youth who goes fishing to help the table is justified: he is guilty if his only thought is pleasure. It is legitimate to kill for food, or the tiger in self-defence; it is wrong unless necessity compels. This spiritual principle distinguishes the necessary from the sinful.*

The deliberating to inquire if a particular taking of life be moral, helps the good life. Man is man in so far as he acts with deliberation; this ethic attests its high origin in that it widely extends the range of that which man must reverence, deepens his sensitiveness, and requires every action to pass the censor.

Any taking of other life by man, whether animal to serve as food or plant in the clearing of a jungle, must be a sacrifice in the spirit of Abraham: on the altar of necessity you sacrifice animal or plant and the consequent spiritual pain will initiate you into the Buddha experience. "Let your board stand an altar on which the pure and the innocent of forest and plain are sacrificed for that which is purer and still more innocent in man." †

This ethic leads to an acute sense of animal suffering:

* *C. & E.*, p. 256.

† Gibran, "Prophet," p. 24.

even the suffering of flowers is implied. "One perception which shadows my existence is that the world is inexplicably mysterious and full of suffering." * He does not say with Buddhism "life which ye prize is long drawn agony, only sadness abides," † but he does confess "only at quite rare moments have I felt really glad to be alive. . . . I could not but feel with a sympathy full of regret all the pain that I saw around me, not only that of men but of the whole creation. . . . From this community of suffering I have never tried to withdraw myself." ‡

Many thousand Africans have been spared long suffering because he did not continue in selfish enjoyment of a university career. This giving a sense of pain to the lower creation may be a vulnerable point in his logical armour; eager to show it nonsense a theologian asked, "Should I help the spider to catch the fly or the fly to escape the spider?"

Critics forget that this sensitiveness, if beyond logic, is characteristic of every ethical advance. It is sentimental to feel the pain inflicted upon a fish, a fly, or a worm. You must close your window rather than that flies burn themselves at your lamp, replace the worm in the grass if it has strayed on to the deadly stone surface, fish only if food-necessity justifies. As for the higher animals, Schweitzer is so persuaded that they are one with us he takes for granted our duty toward them.

If taunted as sentimental he replies quietly that at one time it was wrong to regard the Negro as equal of the white. Every ethical advance is open to such reproach. This keen feeling for the lower creation is so often made fun of, that where its validity is not intuitively felt, it must be emphasized that this teacher is not an unmarried woman whom psychologists delight to patronize. He is a sane married man. He is not a squeamish introvert yattering his inhibitions: he is a surgeon sane as

* *L. & T.*, p. 254. † Arnold. ‡ *L. & T.*, p. 279.

any doctor. This regard towards animals, plants, even crystals, is the cardiac nerve of his system.

He is especially critical of Descartes, whose dictum that animals are mere machines has bewitched Europe: he criticizes Kant because he considers our care for animals that which improves our general sensibility, rather than is it a good in itself. His scalpel knife is reserved for Wilhelm Wundt, who says that true sympathy with animals is not possible. Despite this sense of oneness, so balanced a thinker is he, he never commits himself to the anti-vivisection, vegetarian, or pacifist positions, though his thought leads in this direction.

Since so many animals have been used for vivisection that fact in itself should give to us an added sympathy because they have so served us. What he stimulates is responsibility; he gives a criterion to distinguish the necessary from the sinful, leaving to the individual to decide whether he will kill and so incur guilt or allow life to continue.

To be justified logically this regard for animals is brought into the Schweitzer ethic as a natural extension of altruism: he extends to wide circumference the scope of altruism, the ethic of devotion. Where duty, service, normally extends to the family, the city, the state, only in a few minds widening till all people are embraced, *in his teaching* animals, plants, even leaves of trees, are included as that to which we owe responsibility. That it is thus intellectualized, thus rationally justified is good, but logic gave no man so keen a feeling on the subject. Who will be the Cimabue to paint this Francis of Lambaréné, in his keen feeling one with the saint of Assisi?

Limitless Responsibility

As he extends what we must do, common ethical words widen their meaning. "Pleasure is a longing for a wider life and for the mysterious exaltation of the will-

to-live: pain is the dread of annihilation and the mysterious encroachment on the will-to-live." * As in me pleasure is an intensification of life, and pain is a threat to the life joy, it is similar in other forms of life whether, as in the boisterous terrier, emotion can express itself, or, as with the stately tulip, joy must remain dumb.

As he gave a wide meaning to pleasure so "duty is a limitless responsibility toward all that lives." † This is a full charge. If Luther made of every man a priest, this makes of every man a guardian of all life. If all that is around him is alive, man is a responsible person, under charge to maintain and promote life. Whereas science has expanded the boundaries of our knowledge, religion now expands the boundaries of our duties.

If certain words are the aristocrats of morality what single word is queen of them all? Sympathy is not the essence of reverence for life: it suggests a concern only for suffering. Love is not suitable: it suggests a temporary relationship. No! The one word, queen of them all, is "responsibility."

As a purple dye stains the water, so responsibility suffuses our thought: more constant than our shadow, responsibility allows to us no single moment of pure forgetfulness. Its ever-present demand that we decide if necessity justifies the sacrifice of life, means that we can never be perfectly happy. There is always, disturbing our peace, the remediable misery of our neighbours, the unnecessary suffering of animals.

Schweitzer himself saw with so keen an eye the misery of the African in the statue at Colmar that it haunted him, would not permit enjoyment of academic amenities, but drove him to weariness and illness. It is a terrible thing to come under the lordship of this ethic with its austere continuing responsibility; it is as if, while our normal life is played on the treble, there is a continuing

* *C. & E.*, p. 246.

† *ibid.*, p. 248.

cipher on the bass. They said, he is beside himself: it is a madness not of this world.

Further, responsibility is powerful against thoughtlessness, the common sin of to-day: the world is so ordered it brooks little "stand at ease": the voice of The Eternal commands, with divine imperative, "Attention." "This ethic does not abolish ethical conflicts, rather it heightens them, and requires specific consideration of every single occasion when life must be sacrificed." *

So constant should be our awareness of pain, suffering and distress, that it is true to say "a good conscience is an invention of the Devil": † if the conscience is free it means that the hungry, the sick, the embittered, the primitive races, the animals, all who suffer so much mitigable agony, have been forgotten. There can be no hour of pure joy to the sensitive heart. Truly, this is wild insanity or spiritual insight.

Men watch no one cheats them: angels watch they do not cheat others. Which axiom leads us to the Schweitzer wisdom: a bad conscience comes from God, a good conscience comes from the devil. For these reasons, if we have a bad conscience we have done that which we ought not to have done, if we have a good conscience we have not done that which we ought to have done. This paradox, then, is the Jacob's Ladder up which we climb from the low Mosaic negative to the higher affirmative morality.

Thus far we have seen the elemental become the ethical, have traced the emergence of moral duties and have met the queen of words, responsibility. We have foundation, choir and altar-piece. Now let us ask, in what way does the ethic of reverence for life answer accepted requirements as a full and adequate system of thought?

The transformation as the will-to-live changes into

* *C. & E.*, p. 256.

† *loc. cit.*

reverence for life gives the origin of the moral; the emphasis on limitless responsibility gives a doctrine of duties; keen sensitiveness, with its continuing sense of pain, gives a doctrine of conscience and sin. If these are the pillars of this cathedral of the mind, what of the side chapels, where conscience is instructed? What does this ethic teach?

Concerning forgiveness it is explicit. "All acts of forgiveness are forced upon me by veracity toward myself. I must practise unlimited forgiveness because so much hatred, deceit and slander has stained my own thought."* "If no man can fall lower than the lowest in me and no man can rise higher than the highest in me," † I must forgive all, quietly and without drawing attention to it. Truth is I do not forgive, for I do not allow judgment to form itself in my thinking.

Ach! Herr Meister, it is too, too difficult. Must I be robbed of my wages, defrauded of my rights, thrown on the streets, and forgive? Yes, all of this I must do: even more. "I must carry on the struggle against the evil that is in mankind not by judging others but by judging myself." ‡ Must I be pure as the angels are pure before I speak one condemnation? Must I have rooted out all envy, greed and possessiveness before I condemn a single evil of society? Yes, all of this I must do and even more. We can only realize as much of the kingdom in the life political as we have the kingdom in our heart. If Emerson wrote the delphic wisdom for our fathers, Schweitzer writes for their sons.

Concerning possessions this ethic is individualistic: there is no law ordering equality. Each person must himself decide how much of his life, his possessions, rights and privileges, time or happiness he must devote to others, how much he may retain for his own enjoyment. Social progress is to be realized, a more equitable distribution

* C. & E., p. 252.

† Gibran, "Prophet," p. 44.

‡ C. & E., p. 253.

achieved, by voluntary surrender. The Quaker conscience, not the Marxist command is to bring about the kingdom. Contrary to impatience as this requirement is, he points out that often those with least wealth hold what they have in selfish spirit. Octavia Hill more than Keir Hardie is the Schweitzer spirit.

Responsibility requires that no ten-talented man will use his gifts for his own enjoyment only. The more he is gifted the greater is the sacrifice required in the helping of others. If it be asked why Schweitzer, who "had mastered four of the most technical disciplines of modern study," * turned his back on civilization to go to Africa, the answer is, not disillusion nor restlessness, simply, he obeyed his own ethic.

Not only must the genius pay tribute, all who enjoyed more than others in happy childhood, success, family affection, must yield tribute to the measure of their privilege. "An honest man feels that he must pay Heaven for every hour of happiness with a good spell of hard unselfish work to make others happy." † "Reverence for life is an inexorable creditor." ‡

Always the little services, man to man, are stressed: the little friendliness of healthy man to invalid; the little courtesy of contented man to embittered failure. "Do not be without some secondary work in which you give yourself as man to man." § This ethic never asks that we love humanity: it requires that we serve men. Schweitzer would not be likely to join a society for providing cleaner water for all cows. He would haste to give a drink to a thirsty cow.

Concerning business practice, responsibility demands, in circumstances where a man finds himself compelled to dismiss an incompetent worker, that he, the superior, must take to himself full guilt and not quiet his conscience that he did what was inevitable. This sensitiveness will insure his own growth in grace.

* Selincourt. † Shaw. ‡ *C. & E.*, p. 260. § *loc. cit.*

The preserving of this sensitive temper in business is essential. We must never allow that the machine is greater than the man. Better is three cars and a man than five cars and a robot.

Concerning politics, this ethic stresses that the good man is more than the fine building, the citizen is more than the state, the means are more important than the end.

“ Civilization is the sum-total of all progress made by men and mankind in every sphere of action and from every point of view, so far as this progress helps toward the spiritual perfecting of individuals as the progress of all progress.” *

As you cannot take men to heaven by the bus-load the wise state guards jealously the freedom of every man to walk there in his own way. Difficult as it may be to have a census of the good men, without them, a city, however magnificent, becomes a jungle. If government is the outward and visible expression of the inward and spiritual state of the people it is most necessary to nurture the good, the true, the beautiful. Better is goodness in a hut than evil in a mansion.

Criticisms and Questions

Bertrand Russell points out that the social implications of this ethic prove it impracticable: to postpone social legislation and wait the ethical development of the wealthy classes, to wait till they renounce their privileges, to wait access to mountains, river banks and sea coast till the owners give permission, would be to wait till Doomsday. In industry, for every Cadbury there are a thousand supertax-payers who have as much conscience concerning their privileges as a vampire has conscience concerning his social habits. This is fair criticism.

As Schweitzer gave to us a criterion to differentiate the sinful from the legitimate in individual conduct, so he must give a criterion to say when it is legitimate for

* *C. & E.*, p. 8.

the state to compel the disgorging of wealth, when it should be left to the individual conscience.

It is argued that basically his ethic is Buddhist, not Christian. Responsibility overshadows Christian joy. The inner life of one who allowed this moral code to affect him profoundly would be to long for release from the body, a desire expressed in many of Bach's finest pieces. This is an Eastern longing; the Christian desire is to enter into life more abundantly. One critic suggested that Schweitzer might go mad if he took himself seriously.

In so clearly allowing killing, in stressing that a part of religion is social service, this ethic is distinguished from Buddhism, though Schweitzer is near to the Eastern thought when he writes of "the incomprehensible horror of existence." Despite the apparent truth in this criticism, there is great joy in the service of responsibility.

Even sympathetic students are puzzled by the gap in logic when he passes from will-to-live to reverence for life; the transition is not made clear. The sentence "a mysticism of ethical union with being grows out of it," hardly explains how he turns the elemental will into the spiritual reverence.

The snowdrop paragraph is the writer's attempt, in lack of his own cogent reasoning, to illustrate the transformation. This transition has been attacked as not logical: but it is not illogical, and is true to our experience. His failure to build this bridge somewhat justifies the criticism that the ethic is not as logical as it purports to be. As, to us, the mystical is more than the logical, we are content with this "breathing into the nostrils the breath of life."

If personal immortality is essential to ethics it is a weakness in this code that it is nowhere mentioned. Usually it is conceded that men can and do live good lives without belief in survival: but shivering faith always adds, men are only able to live nobly without this faith

because of a moral capital accumulated in ages of faith, capital quickly squandered. Many theologians regard immortality as the only rock on which ethics can be built: this ethic, they say, is built on sand.

Yet the omission of immortality is only a severe reticence, not a denial. When Schweitzer acknowledges that "ethics can let space and time go hang," that it is not possible fully to understand reality, that the cosmos is an enigma, he is only rephrasing, in our language, Calvin: "The essence of God is indeed incomprehensible by us. . . . Wherefore let us willingly leave to God the knowledge of His own essence."

What appears agnosticism concerning God and immortality is only an acute appreciation of the truth expounded by Pascal: "I look on all sides and see nothing but obscurity, nature offers me nothing but matter for doubt and disquiet. Did I see nothing there which marked a Divinity I should decide not to believe Him. Did I see everywhere the marks of a Creator, I should rest peacefully in faith. But seeing too much to deny and too little to affirm, my state is pitiful, and I have a hundred times wished that if God upheld nature, He would mark the fact unequivocally, but that if the signs which she gives of a God are fallacious, she would wholly suppress them, that she would either say all or nothing, that I might see what part I should take . . . Vere tu es Deus Absconditus." Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself.

There is a meet reticence in writing upon The Eternal: the tremendous mystery fascinates Schweitzer: he is sensible of the God who hides Himself. His reticence suggests a denial of a personal God and individual immortality to the quick reader accustomed to garish certitudes. These are not to be had from him. That he does not write glowing rhapsodies concerning the love of God nor tell the joys of immortal life does not infer that he denies these beliefs. If true love is silent

yet the light of the eye tells all, can we not say that that faith is deepest which least proclaims its belief? We must not too much identify Pascal and Schweitzer. They differ.

“Every religion which does not say that God is hidden is not the true religion, and every religion which does not show the reason of it is unedifying.” * If Pascal be right, this ethic, having taught that God is hidden and showing cause why, is both true and edifying.

Its glory is twofold: it calls on men to live righteously for no other reason than that it is right so to do; it establishes a reverence for life to which three classes of men can yield obedience: those who stress the Fatherhood of God and the life after death as chief reason why men should live a moral life; those who feel that God is a God Who hides Himself and maintain a silence concerning the invisible; those who altogether deny. Often the less explicit the law, the more true is the obedience.

This defence may not be allowed. The criticism is pursued. “Unless there is purposiveness in life, an objective end to be realized, super-temporal values to be apprehended, and an eternal background to be approached adventurously through the mists of moral and spiritual enterprise, I cannot see that we have any strong defence against relapse into purely pagan and sectional moral codes.” †

There is no answer to this which a debating society would allow, but we give an analogy. Like Goethe, “who lived through the powerful influence of a Kant, a Fichte, a Hegel, yet stood comparatively coldly on one side,” unimpressed by their speculations yet deeply religious, Schweitzer also is content with Goethe to live within a nature-philosophy learned from the Stoics, the Chinese and Spinoza. His ethical passion is from Jesus.

One chief criticism is that the ethic does not take account of gradation in life. It is nowhere suggested

* *Thoughts*, p. 585.

† Crabtree.

that insects moved only by instinct are of less value than man, moved by intelligence. Even if we incur guilt when we destroy a man, an animal, an insect, a flower, surely the guilt incurred is not equal in all cases?

Nowhere does Schweitzer say it is as equally sinful to destroy a moth as to destroy a horse, but his enthusiasm for the maintenance of life, his insistence that we incur guilt even when we legitimately destroy life, lends colour to this criticism. There is lacking the criterion to determine which should be sacrificed, which preserved, if choice is presented. Emil Brunner complains that it is founded on "an undifferentiated conception of life." He terms it a bastard ethic and considers that in two lines he has proved it folly.

Brunner This language is strong. To answer this criticism we give Schweitzer's study of the difference between man and the lower creation. In our will-to-live we share with all others, all life, a common urge. With crystal, plant and animal we strive as they to achieve our possible perfection. According to their order all strive. As Paul recognized degrees of privilege in the Kingdom of God, Schweitzer recognizes orders of privilege in nature: all strive each after their endowment.

"In everything that exists there is at work an imaginative force, which is determined by ideals in us, beings who can move about freely and are capable of pre-considered, purposive working, the impulse to perfection is given in such a way that we aim at raising to their highest material and spiritual value both ourselves and every existing thing which is open to our influence." *

This quotation Kraus considers the finest statement of his faith. Why the will-to-live in an animal is only blind instinctive effort, whereas in man it becomes a moral tension, he can no more explain than he can tell why one man has ten talents, another has but one: it is mystery. If he has no answer he has a religious

* *G. & E.*, p. 217.

message, that the privileged ought to feel responsibility according to the richness of their endowment.

As the man with ten talents toward the man of one talent, so men must feel toward animals, insects and plants. If there must be emphasis, even exaggeration in a moral code, it is on the nobler side to say that animal or insect is as perfect as is man, to be revered as man is revered, than so to degrade animals and insects that man is allowed to destroy them without compunction. The finely graded schemes of more or less guilt are not in Schweitzer's mind. All is guilt.

This compulsion to guilt is reason why many refuse his reasoning. That which we are compelled toward, they urge, cannot be guilt. They seek for explanation of his guilt emphasis and trace it to the doctrine of original sin which prevailed in the church of his youth. This sounds strained. If answer is possible it can only be urged that nature does involve us in guilt. Recently, men were compelled to fight each other: it was inevitable, but we see it as guilt; because of our perception life is nobler. To the degree it quickens guilt men become less guilty, a lovely paradox.

One critic argues that the ethic abolishes the meaning of history. We should have thought the purpose of the ethic was that we fashion history to a finer pattern. Must we believe, if we would be a Christian, the grand finale of the universe is human life on this planet: some thinkers appear to need a cosmic compliment before they obey the moral law: only weak children need over-much praise.

The attack is pressed; Schweitzer is not a Christian: but who gave to this iconoclast the sceptre of the Vatican that he might judge? Apparently some thinkers want to play christian all by themselves: only selfish children dislike sharing their toys.

In a children's hospital visiting parents greeted their children as "Mother's Baby" or "Daddy's Boy." One

small orphan boy could stand it no longer. "I'm nobody's nothing," he remarked sadly. We all want to be mothered. It is said this ethic takes from men the Fatherhood of God, tragic if true, for the child in every grown man knows that this is the heart of Christian faith. Are we children of God's Love or orphans of the cosmic storm?

When we come to manhood we know the world is bigger than four rooms and a garden, yet still, within our adult circle of relatives, we are sustained by affection as we were cradled in love when young. This is the Schweitzer ethic. Within the warm flow of the God of Love piety responds to the Fatherhood of God, aware that outside the current of good there is an ocean of being we cannot comprehend.

To criticize * the ethic is good, and necessary, but to present Schweitzer with a bouquet of nettles is a strange tribute, especially when, inside the bouquet, is a snake—a suggestion that the form of dedication at age twenty-one was not a full love of the Lord Jesus.

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Reverence all Holy Writ and The Life it reveals.

Reverence the Holy Day and keep it as a day of renewal.

Hold fast to thine own sincerity: seek always for the higher motive in others.

Honour thy parents: be kindly affectioned to thy kindred.

Be kind to all animals: do not thoughtlessly hurt any bird or wayside flower.

Give heed to the natural laws of health.

Hold sacred the life creating power.

Do not strive for sudden wealth: there is truer happiness in a higher affection.

Finally, it is required of thee, as in a spirit of pure adoration, to work for God uninfluenced by fear of punishment or hope of reward.

* Murry.

analyse!

A Leader of Leaders

Schweitzer's emphasis on thought rather than faith, his practice of mercy rather than law, would, in an earlier time, have burned him with Servetus. He would never have ruled with Calvin.

To what degree is Schweitzer influenced by the spirit of the time? A significant emphasis in his studies of Jesus, Paul, Bach is that they were children of their time. That Zarathustra said a surgeon must not operate on believers till he had practised on an unbeliever, that Plato never doubted slaves were necessary in the civilized state, merely illustrates they shared the thought limitations of their age; they transcended their time primarily by reason of passionate ethical devotion rather than by virtue of higher enlightenment.

Because of a mystic longing to be one with The Eternal, desire to be freed from this body of death, deepened sense of the moral law, Spinoza, Bach and Kant rose above littleness, yet always in the form and content of their art they were the children of their time. Schweitzer too is limited by his generation but transcends it by reason of ethical devotion. Great men merit greatness, not that they know more than their neighbours, but that they do more about what they know.

This helps us to appraise Schweitzer. The weariness of the First World War is a dark influence clouding his work. The over-earnestness of a passionate nature also explains his poor estimate of this generation. This, wherein he is probably wrong, we can forget. From the eighteenth century he may derive inspiration but he does not belong there. No, he is as typical of the twentieth century as Mussolini, Hitler, Masaryk, Nansen, Russell, Shaw, Unamuno, Smuts, Churchill, Wilson or Roosevelt. Whereas they represent the belly, the muscle, the brain, or other part of the body social, Schweitzer is part of the soul, the conscience. It is a

tribute to our moral earnestness that we have produced such a leader; "no man can rise higher than the highest in us." *

What he writes of Bach is true of himself. "It is not the artist who lives—it is the spirit of the time that lives in him. All the artistic endeavours, desires, creations, aspirations and errors of his own and previous generations are concentrated and worked out to their conclusion in him." † If Spengler expressed the gloom, depression and sense of futility that obscured the future, Schweitzer expressed the hope, faith and determination that inspired the best of the nineteen twenties. Where Karl Marx derived his theory of increasing misery from the hungry forties, disproved by later history, yet his ethical passion gave urge to social striving, so Schweitzer's theory that we are a dud generation is a little too salty, yet his ethical passion is indeed the preservative of society.

Loathe as we are to accept his judgment that we are left-overs, World War II is a sombre proof that Schweitzer has much to support his contention. We shudder as we read the deeds of mad Caligula: are we case-hardened that we do not react so strongly to events of our own time? Be this as it may, we must be cautious in our disagreement, for though Schweitzer is too sane to soil his pen by writing "I told you so," he might now write Ezekiel to his own Jeremiah, seeing Europe as a valley of dry bones. How and when will the dry bones live?

This is where faith takes sadness by the scruff of the neck and lifts it up. It may be that all evidence points to a third world war. It may be that we do not think profoundly. Even so, as with Paul, we labour on, Schweitzer our true exemplar, faith seeing that which is invisible, the nobler society that will arise, his ethic the winter seed of a glorious spring flowering of civilized ideals.

As civilization is the spirituality that dwells in the heart

* Gibran.

† *Bach*, v. 1, p. 1.

of the enlightened, the more that respond to Schweitzer, or follow other worthy ideal, the sooner will springtime flower. Impatient with the Spenglerian analysis that strides through history with seven-league boots, Schweitzer speaks the age-old gospel of Jesus and Paul in a modern vernacular, man can be the master of his social destiny. It would be interesting to have his comment on Toynbee's and Sorokin's theories. *But I do not anticipate his acc to Sch*

One of the curious features of today is that whereas determinism was dressed in heavy crepe by Spengler, now it is dressed in vivid purple by Sorokin. According to him, round the corner, is an epoch of morning and sunlight. Just wait and it comes. Whatever else Schweitzer says he insists that we speed or retard the golden age by our striving. Man makes history. He never agrees that history is a current on which we are borne, willy nilly, to the peace of the great lakes or to Niagara and destruction. When Schweitzer wrote his book Spengler's fascinating gloom lived its short life. Now Sartre, philosophy gone blind, religion gone morbid, is the false prophet. Happily, Schweitzer's thought, having outlived the one promises to outlive the other.

Though we have given the pros and cons of discussion, our firm conviction abides, his ethic is but acolyte to The Threefold Sacrifice: this is his glory and his reign. Important as the parables are, they would have been lost in Talmudic wisdom but that Calvary gave them enduring sanctity: the Sermon on the Mount would have been forgotten but that Calvary made the speaker, lord of the spiritual. Consecration is greater than wisdom. To know all truth is less than to do a little good.

Schweitzer's ethic derives its lifeblood from The Threefold Sacrifice. Unless this is clearly stated in all works upon the subject, the light in Schweitzer is missed. This, not in Schweitzer's own reasoning, is our one and only departure from the Schweitzer text but is our firm conviction.

We permit ourselves one further comment. *Ethics and Civilization* is not easy reading. Its terms are not those of the market-place. The fiery portions are precisely those parts where he breaks away from the technical terms, addressing himself to a human situation. When the heart of the professor bids the intellect pause, his book fires with Galilean flame. By a true instinct the Christian public, admiring the man, inquires what he has to say. Few, reading only this book, would inquire how he lives.

What is needed is a simple statement of his imperative in the words of our Bible tradition. Another Scotsman is needed to do for Schweitzer what Carlyle did for Goethe, absorb the technical till it becomes thought of his thinking, then give it in the phrases of our English thought. Better still if a young Emerson would make pilgrimage to Lambaréné, work there for a time and get to know the doctor, he might give to us the representative of goodness.

It is significant that no one near to Schweitzer has written his life story. The reason appears to be that which stopped Stephan Zweig. He had a projected biography all planned: came to see Schweitzer but, before he left, after one day with him, confessed to Alice Ehlers * that the personal impression was so deep he felt now he would have to wait. Schweitzer is simple, modest, natural but somehow greatness keeps breaking through: no, not greatness, goodness. He makes goodness infectious. Those who know him think that the adequate biography cannot be written.

The Mustard Seed

Though his friends are many, Schweitzer is not yet a public figure. This is our loss, for if he could be as popular as Gandhi was, our spiritual life would gain. It will come. That hundreds of thousands know of

* *Jubilee Book*, p. 234.

G. B. Shaw, approving his enthusiasm for a sensibly ordered state, whereas only hundreds know of Schweitzer, is history repeating itself: the popular organist was Frescobaldi, who merited his passing reputation, but the true musician was Bach. In confidence we wait.

How does his influence spread? His books on Lambaréné have brought him fame: they have circulated widely in eight languages. His other works sell slowly but steadily in musical and theological circles. Writers tell the story of his life. Already a weighty literature concerning him exists; serious journals give prominence to his teaching. In booklets, through lectures, but chiefly because individual fires individual, Schweitzer becomes a hero of renunciation and suffering.

Schweitzer literature occupies a full shelf. A penetrating study by Professor Kraus, a criticism written with discernment, should be read. Mr. Middleton Murry's criticism is skim milk gone sour. "Near to megalomania" is but one of his phrases. Curious, that the man of words, so often wrong himself, now seeks to correct the man of action. Two books by Mrs. C. E. B. Russell are the best thus far published. She has the Schweitzer spirit. Her book on monkeys at Lambaréné is delightful. George Seaver has published a biography that must be studied; also a thoughtful exposition of the ethic. Hagedorn has written a popular story without the theology. Melvin Arnold and C. R. Joy have issued a record of the African work that in text and pictures is first class. C. R. Joy has also issued a well-compiled Anthology. Robert's *Jubilee Book* should be glanced at. Salmon's is the best of the short hero-biographies. Lind and Wyott-Secretan have written in German. Articles on him would run to four pages of references.

If the Divine Comedy had to lack illustration till Dürer felt its power and its majesty, the life and thought of Schweitzer must wait: when, thirty years hence, the upward spiral of history overtops Victorian earnestness,

someone will feel his life call, the adequate book will be written. An Alexander Korda may also be inspired, for a scenario could readily be prepared. Meantime, if common wood may point the traveller to Assisi, we have related the story and presented the thought of a noble man.

As it was declared to Victorian England that the natural supernaturalism of Goethe would take children from the mines, redeem men from selfishness and extrude the cancer from industrial life, we prophesy for the second Elizabethan England that reverence for life will deepen the spiritual life, will free Europe from the bitterness of war, will create a society where privilege renders added service.

In this gospel of reverence, holding so finely the poetry of Whittier and the politics of Lincoln in its ethic of perfection and its ethic of devotion, America has its gospel for the century of the common man. Only one power is greater than the atomic bomb, the soul of man. Very true, but something is greater than the soul of man, the gospel that fires that soul. He who surrenders his will to the ethic of reverence for life, accepting its dominion, soon will find himself with Jesus in Galilee called to make sacrifice.

*Sainted Pioneer of Salvation **

Schweitzer's ethic is both less and more than he thinks it to be. It is not the first time Cosmic Pessimism has been linked to Human Optimism, not the first time that man's courage has gripped cosmic despair by the throat. Bertrand Russell, Unamuno, and others have written words like his words. But their aeroplanes have no petrol. It is the Threefold Sacrifice that gives wings to Schweitzer's ethic.

To the discerning his ethic is more than he claims it to be. It is history giving birth to a thought. The child of his brain is beyond him, as Faust was beyond Goethe,

* *Testament of Beauty*, p. 141.

as the Passion was beyond Bach, as everlasting peace was beyond Jesus. The Saviour, the Musician, the Poet, were the instruments of a higher will. The spirit of the time lived in them.

To the discerning his ethic is Luther leaving Wittenberg: every man is made a priest mediating salvation to every little brother. His ethic is Copernican man making himself at home in his new universe: the heart is so warmed doing the deeds of mercy he forgets the chill outside. His ethic is evolution finding a soul: the wealthy gorilla shares with the hungry monkeys: grace triumphs over nature.

With a slab of stone and a chisel, some dust and a finger, a pen and paper, men write. Yet ethics remain words till the miracle happens. It is when men believe that the one who wrote the words was a good man, that men change the words, as did Paul, as did Ananda. History selects, faith imposes divinity upon literature. Like as not men wrote better than Moses, better than Jesus. Yet men knew that a good man had spoken. They listened. If, in our wonderland, Alice can find a gooder man than Schweitzer, his words will be treasured. Religion is caught before it is taught. "If a single man achieves the highest kind of love it will be sufficient to neutralize the hate of millions." *

His ethic stirs the will: his life fires the imagination. The one puts paraffin in our lamps, the other strikes the match. The will alone rarely makes bad men good men, seldom turns good men into saints, never raises saints to saviours. Imagination alone usually ends in day-dreams. But when the consecrated will and the holy imagination join forces men see God and Duty as one joy. Men are freed from false delights, they learn the secret of happiness. Much as Schweitzer dislikes star-eyed admiration we must quietly say it is because he is holy, fair and wise that many men think his wisdom is our peace.

* Gandhi.

ONE OF THE ILLUMINATI

Amateur or Genius

It is said, with muffled disparagement, his energies are too scattered, his interests too diverse, to allow that supremacy in any one subject which raises a man to an unquestioned immortality. What truth, if any, is there in this point of view, or is he "the great man's great man"?

If he had given himself entirely to music, whether he would have climbed higher than he now stands is hard to say: but had he done so he would have remained merely a musician. Had he confined himself to theology he would have completed his projected history of the early church, and countered the criticism which his interpretation has provoked. Had he given himself only to writing on goodness he could have better systematized his ethic and completed his philosophy of civilization; but if so, whatever the wholeness thereby attained, he would have remained only a Strassburg philosopher.

No one, it is urged, so diverse in his interests can be a master in any one; he is only a gifted amateur. Criticism growls, his book on Jesus never considers the miracles, nor the teaching, nor the resurrection. His *Paul* does not sufficiently justify his selection of materials considered by him as genuine. His *Ethics* is a too summary dismissal of acknowledged thinkers. There is applied to him what is spoken against Thomas Carlyle: "he imagined himself a philosopher but was only a prophet."

There would be truth in these criticisms if his laurel wreath was given for specialization, but it is of other character. Even so, his scholarship on details, his work as a specialist, is meticulous. Every reviewer of *Paul* paid tribute to its deep learning and massive quality; his *Quest* has affected the study of the New Testament; his *Bach* has contributed mightily to the revival of this music; his *Ethic* comes slowly and quietly to prominence. Nevertheless, though his scholarship is profound and provocative, his true claim to be heard is that he is primarily a mystic, giving form and scholarship to his illuminations. All his major books are the working out of an illumination. Though his genius in every field is nine-tenths perspiration and one-tenth inspiration always the vision preceded the hard work.

At least eight illuminations led to action: when the village bell sounded to him as the voice of God; when the morning sun called him to consecrate his life to God; when the sense of the dynamic Jesus was given to him; when he listened to the modern organ; when Bach as a tone painter came to him; when he read the appeal for medical help from Lambaréné; when the significance of reverence was made clear to him; when he saw the site of his third hospital.

Though he is subject to illuminations, his scholarship equals the scholarship of others. That he has elected to carry forward simultaneously four studies, theology, medicine, music, ethics, must be accepted by us as Weimar accepted poetry, prose, optics, mining and government from Goethe. Whether the second part of *Faust* would have been more clear had the poet given less time to government is hardly a question to discuss; we accept genius.

One chief reason why we are drawn to Goethe is that he was more than a poet, as we are drawn to Schweitzer because he is more than a theologian. In a time when science, historical research, music and

theology are dominated by the specialist he remains universal. Competent in history and science, master of philosophy, original thinker in theology, man of affairs, musician, surgeon and doctor, hospital builder, he comprehends in himself several aspects of modern culture. Is there not a danger that specialization "tends to trivialize the mentality of the teaching profession"? *

His talents are a family of six lively youngsters: the father has a difficult time, keeping all in their place, yet giving to all their due. He is busier than most men. He has played no games, always he has worked. We English are wise; we regard football and cricket as a contribution to the world: however, even lacking a sports sweater, we accept him. There are theologians as earnest, philosophers as penetrating in their analysis, ethical teachers as zealous for personal righteousness and social reform, medical missionaries as devoted in life service to primitive races, musicians as gifted on the organ, critics as clever in expounding Bach, prodigies who achieve fame in early life, strong men who do the work of three men, saints who renounce wealth and congenial college life, but where is one all these at one time?

If words could save, Fleet Street would suffice: failing that there is always the reading room of the British Museum. One can readily take a hundred thinkers from the shelf but it does not yield redemption, fascinating as the study may be for minds able to indulge intellectual chess. Behind the great religions there was a life, the secret of their power. Goodness is greater than truth, Jerusalem is greater than Athens, Socrates is greater than the works of Plato, Francis is greater than the works of Aquinas. This is so true concerning the Gospels it needs no comment.

Though Schweitzer's social thinking is as able to fight for the heavyweight as any system, the strength of

* Whitehead.

argument it has, the skill in point counterpoint, such dexterity is not its final resource. Set Jacques Maritain and Schweitzer on the table. Let their systems fight it out. What results? Very little. Let the story of goodness be told, and men are strangely moved.

It may well be there are lives of greater goodness in the present world than Schweitzer's. History alone can determine the matter. It is our faith that the thought with the greatest measure of goodness behind it is The Thought; the writing with the noblest life behind it is The Word. We have given reasons for believing that Schweitzer's thought and word are helpful to this generation, but if a more worthy be brought forward, then is our social life the richer, and redemption nearer. The Devil can give the job of catching clever men to his apprentices, but a good man needs his personal attention.

A Rembrandt of the Pen

He has written no poetry but he is a master of one poetic gift, the use of simile, metaphor and all variety of picture language. His books are rich in scattered pearls: "As the spider's net is an admirably simple construction so long as it remains stretched between the threads which hold it in position, but becomes a hopeless tangle as soon as it is loosed from them; so the Pauline mysticism is an admirably simple thing so long as it is set in the framework of eschatology, but becomes a hopeless tangle as soon as it is cut loose from this." *

When concentration slackens it is possible to continue reading merely for the joy of his crowded images, picturesque as holy Benares: "This religiousness, however, does not build up for itself a complete world-view, but resigns itself to the necessity of leaving its cathedral unfinished. It finishes the choir only, but in this choir piety maintains a living and never-ceasing divine ser-

* *Paul*, p. 140.

vice." * Removed from context they are museum pieces, but in setting they are perfect as a Van Eyck altarpainting.

A judgment is delivered thus: "the French Revolution is a snowstorm falling upon trees in blossom." † A sermon is preached, "the power of ideals is incalculable. We see no power in a drop of water. But let it get into a crack in the rock and be turned to ice, and it splits the rock." ‡ Metaphor is never permitted to save discussion: always it is menial to the reigning argument. Medicine, music, theology and ethics, all are subservient to his genius, all are called upon to provide apt illustration.

Frequently a Hogarth picture is contained in a single word. His portrayal of Europe as "staggering" into 1860 has a stinging humour adequate to his thought. Herbert's "anaemic" ethical theory is a judgment in a word; Hegel as captain of a derelict ocean liner is a humorous yet penetrating picture. Though this gift is severely disciplined, picture words, metaphors, similes, are thick in his writings as rabbits in a burrowed field.

He is gifted as a descriptive writer. "A regular storm set in, and the ship pitched and tossed like a great rocking horse, and rolled from starboard to port and back from port to starboard, with impartial delight. . . . Being without experience of ocean travel, I had forgotten to make the two cabin trunks fast with cords, and in the night they began to chase each other about. The two hat cases also, which contained our sun-helmets, took part in the game without reflecting how badly off they might come in it, and when I tried to catch the trunks, I nearly got one leg crushed between them and the wall of the cabin, so I left them to their fate and contented myself with lying quietly in my berth and counting how many seconds elapsed between each plunge made by the ship and the corresponding rush of the boxes." §

* *C. & E.*, p. 250.

‡ *C. & E.*, p. 100.

† *ibid.*, p. 101.

§ *P.F.*, p. 12.

It must go to the credit of the Bay of Biscay that it stopped Schweitzer's study. He can tell a story, read *From My African Notebook*. Many of his comparisons and similitudes contain a rich humour. No one who has read "the marks of the dog's paws" * but can understand that there was at school a giggling Albert. This same humorous person heartily enjoys Joseph's reply: "How can I expect other women to obey me in observing hospital rules if my own wife does not obey me?" † Joseph's use of butcher language in the surgery: "this woman has a pain in her upper left cutlet," ‡ is familiar. Quoted in this way his humour is robbed of its laughter, but in its setting it is funny as Falstaff in the Boar's Head Tavern.

Despite the incidental humour, the poetic language and the clarity of expression, until the chapters mentioned below are published in one volume he must remain a student's delight, except for his description of the African work. As an introduction to his work for readers with limited time, this order of reading is recommended: *On the Edge of* (and *More from*) *the Primeval Forest*, *Childhood and Youth*, *Christianity and the Religions of the World*, chapter twenty-one of *Civilization and Ethics*, chapters nineteen and twenty of *The Quest*, chapters seven, twelve and fourteen of *The Mysticism of Paul*, *Goethe*, *Two Addresses*, chapters nineteen and twenty of *Bach*, the whole of *My Life and Thought*.

Basil de Selincourt ranked this autobiography as one of the two greatest books of 1932, significant in that creative thinkers direct our movement, a far-seeing appreciation. Even so this self-portrait, rough as certain of Rembrandt's, is not all that every reviewer desired, perhaps because it was dashed off in between other important work. Yet it is an invaluable help to the understanding of his work, as it provides a reliable summary of his views. The subjects do not live as they

* *C. & E.*, p. 232. † *M.P.F.*, p. 43. ‡ *P.F.*, p. 32.

live in the larger works, good reason why the autobiography should be read last. The man of flesh and blood is most real in the story of his African work.

As an artist, out of his own writing, we can best characterize him. What he admires in Bach is true of his own work, "not a word too many, not a word too few. . . . Bach's mind was architectonic. The powerful aesthetic impression given by his works comes from the harmony of the whole structure, in which all the copious and animated details fit quite naturally. Bach's music is the perfected Gothic of the art. It is extremely rich in the most striking and interesting evolution of detail; but not one of them diverts the interest to itself: the only purpose of them all seems to be to throw into relief the fundamental simplicity, vitality, and lucidity of the structure." *

This is an adequate analysis of his own four works on Bach, Jesus, Paul and Ethics. Consider, as illustrating this quotation, in what way his ethical work is built up. There is the structure of the ethic from its foundation, the will-to-live, to its steeple, oneness with the eternal as the end of all thinking. The separate chapels, reverence toward all animal life, distress because of the compulsion to destroy, responsibility to the degree of privilege in endowment or gifts, these fit naturally into the cathedral scheme. Yet detailed and elaborate as they may be they never detract from the architectonic simple grandeur of the entire plan.

Consider also his books upon Jesus and Paul. As the Gothic design is the simplest of religious architecture, more single-pointed in its aspiration than the mosque, more central in its object of adoration than the Hindu temple, so the Schweitzer presentation of Jesus and Paul has a central simplicity lacking in other interpretations. Jesus and Paul stand out clear of obstructions as Salisbury Cathedral: never once does the most elaborate enquiry

* *Bach*, v. 1, p. 213.

into text, Hebrew thought or Greek source obscure the dominating figure.

This subordinating of the multitude of facts to the leading idea, high and lifted up, is the result of great labour. His own writing describes himself: "When asked how he managed to bring his art to such perfection, Bach usually answered: 'I have had to work hard; anyone who will work equally hard will be able to do as much.' " * Not only a hard worker, Schweitzer has an encyclopædic memory: that he is able to marshal such regiments of facts, commanding now one, now another, to attack, or sustain his position, is a skill that gave to one reviewer opportunity for half a column of comment.

The pile of reading behind his chief works is colossal. He writes of Bach, "We can only form a faint idea of the long and arduous mental work that is presupposed in the development of a characteristic theme, according to its own mysterious laws, into a masterly piece of music." † We too can have but slight idea of the painstaking investigation behind his writing. To write ten pages in his thesis on *The Mental Sanity of Jesus* he immersed himself for three months in the study of paranoia.

The Mantle of Goethe

Many admirers of Schweitzer cannot accept his reason why he left Europe: they deem his work in Africa escape, not heroism: it may have been quixotic, but it was not wise. Could not ten thousand others have done such work? Would it not have been more helpful if he had remained in Europe and with genius, personality and pen battled for freedom of thought, so grievously lost? Is it not a man's duty to render his highest service, that service which his gifts make it so that he alone can render?

These questions seldom come from a town audience, but the university raises them. There is significance in

* *Bach*, v. 1, p. 154.

† *ibid*, p. 211.

this. The common people have a quicker appreciation of heroism, even if it be a little mad. Is not history made by the few not always easy to fit into a category? Higher history is certainly dominated by the few who, following strange courses, have wrestled and suffered, that "the poor and the humble might have Light, Guidance, A Faith to Live By." *

Schweitzer's theology is influenced by Paul; his music returns to Bach, his ethic finds nourishment in Stoicism, Laotze and Spinoza. Who then influences his conduct? After Jesus, it is assuredly Goethe. From the poet he derives his understanding of life, from Jesus his inspiration. If we would understand his going to Africa, not only his oneness with Jesus but his kinship with Goethe must be emphasized. As the poet undertook a "harz reise" to reclaim a pastor's son from insanity, urged thereto by conscience, as he gave Faust the last service after a long pilgrimage through sensuous pleasure and problems of thought the reclaiming of waste land that humble people might enjoy better life, so on a higher level of moral life, but in the same spirit, Schweitzer goes to Africa to reclaim Negroes lost to pain and suffering but for his medicine.

Though Schweitzer has written only seventy pages upon Goethe it is clear at which well he fills his bucket. In the three thousand pages of published work few references show interest in Dante, Shakespeare, Racine, Ibsen. He must know their work for they are one with Bach, even if their medium be less universal. But as Cervantes is in Miguel de Unamuno, Milton in Robert Bridges, Kierkegaard in Ibsen, Goethe is in Schweitzer. Even without the seventy pages of frank avowal the reader who loves his Goethe feels the older master to be in Schweitzer, as painters feel van Dyck to be in Gainsborough. There is in all Schweitzer's writings a felt presence, an atmosphere of Weimar.

* Carlyle.

The books on Africa even in their mosaic structure, not to mention their feeling, might have come from the author of *Wilhelm Meister* himself. Schweitzer's *J. S. Bach* and the second part of *Faust* could be paralleled. *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle* is in the spirit of the first three acts, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* in the spirit of the last act of *Egmont*. Likenesses jump to claim recognition. If no thinker is free of history, if all writers have an intellectual ancestry, Schweitzer is a son of Goethe. Yet more significant than these likenesses is the indebtedness for the phrase, reverence for life. When it came to Schweitzer as an illumination he possibly forgot its earlier creator, Goethe. There is a fine passage in *Wilhelm Meister* where, as a study in eurythmics for children, Goethe teaches a threefold reverence, for that which is above, below and around us.

"Three kinds of gesture you have seen; and we inculcate a threefold reverence, which, when commingled and formed into one whole, attains its highest force and effect. The first is reverence for what is above us. That posture, the arms crossed over the breast, the look turned joyfully towards Heaven: that is what we have enjoined on young children, requiring from them thereby a testimony that there is a God above, who images and reveals himself in parents, teachers, superiors. Then comes the second: reverence for what is under us. Those hands folded over the back, and, as it were, tied together, that down turned, smiling look, announce that we are to regard the earth with attention and cheerfulness: from the bounty of the earth we are nourished; the earth affords unutterable joys; but disproportionate sorrows she also brings us. . . . At last (the third reverence) he stands forth frank and bold, not selfishly isolated, only in combination with his equals does he front the world." *

What is a poetical fragment in Goethe's long novel

* W. M. *Travels*, ch. 10.

Schweitzer has elaborated into a carefully thought-out rule of life; what in Goethe was a parable is in Schweitzer a principle. Not only the phrase but many of the difficulties are considered by Goethe. "Man does not willingly submit himself to reverence; or rather he never so submits himself: it is a higher sense, which must be communicated to his nature; which only in some peculiarly favoured individuals unfolds itself spontaneously, who on this account too have of old been looked upon as saints and gods." *

Goethe elaborated his idea as a theory of education sympathetic to the young as Montessori, careful of the wayward as Neill, educating the child by pageant as Hayward has taught, a Utopia attractive but remote. Schweitzer gives us a rule of life, ever informed by the spirit that was in Christ.

Inevitable consequence of indiscipline in his earlier life the spiritual teaching of Goethe was not appreciated as its intrinsic value merited. As a philosophy of life, as a way of deepening the spiritual, it has seldom been surpassed, but it was wisdom from a man too human to be a life exemplar. Happily, now, this same teaching, more clearly expressed, is given by one whose life is all that the moral conscience rightly demands. Folks like their milk in clean pitchers.

So near are the two characters that much of what Schweitzer writes in praise of Goethe is autobiography: "Goethe recognized that it was not wise to force upon oneself that which is foreign to the temperament: seek rather to bring to easy expression the natural goodness and that which is unwise put aside. . . . To this effort Goethe addressed himself. In *Truth and Poetry* he speaks of the seriousness with which he early regarded the world and himself. All sympathetic people who entered his circle were affected by this earnestness. . . . Through self-discipline Goethe attained to a humanity, founded

* W. M. *Travels*, ch. 10.

on truth and purity, distinguished by reason of its tranquillity and goodness, its freedom from envy and full self-mastery. . . . For the exercise of these virtues his life provided numerous occasions. It is in no way true that he had a successful and easy career. After *Werther* none of his books achieved a popular success. . . . By these means Goethe achieved a humanity lofty, quick to serve, gracious, whose charm and greatness consisted just in this, that it was so genuine and natural. . . . How great must have been the impression which the personality of Goethe communicated that Wieland said of him, 'he is the greatest, the finest, the most lordly human being that God has created,' and that Schiller said of him that he was the most worthy personality known to him." *

Lovers of Dante are agreed that in the short works there is an intimacy which must be known if a full appreciation of *The Divine Comedy* is to be enjoyed. Equally is this true of Schweitzer. All his work can be read with a more intimate sense of knowing the man, if his two lectures upon Goethe are read. These are the *Memorial Oration*, delivered at Frankfurt on the Main on the centenary of Goethe's death, and the *Address*, when he was awarded the Goethe prize. These are published in America.†

The oration is a study of the poet and his message for today. The address tells of personal indebtedness with mention of the occasions in his life when he was deeply aware his work would be approved by Goethe. A score of parallels suggest themselves between his life and the life of Goethe.

"When at the end of 1925, owing to a severe famine which endangered the existence of my hospital, I was compelled to get a plantation made for it, so that during any famine in the future we might be able to keep our heads above water to some extent through our own

* *Goethe*, pp. 34-36.

† The Beacon Press.

resources, I was obliged to superintend the clearing of the forest myself. The very miscellaneous body of workers which the chance of the moment produced from among the willing ones of the friends of our patients, would bow to no authority but that of 'the old Doctor' as I was called. So I stood for weeks and months in the forest worrying over refractory labourers, in order to wrest from it land that would produce food for us. Whenever I got reduced to despair I thought how Goethe had devised for the final activities of his Faust the task of winning from the sea land on which men could live and feed themselves, and thus Goethe stood at my side in the swampy forest as my smiling comforter, and the man who really understood." *

There is a sanity and concern for the practical in both poet and thinker. Even when mighty plans of intellectual activity were in Goethe's mind he would sit for hours over the accounts and finances of a small principality or give money to the physician to be distributed anonymously to the poor. He knew that the spiritual is in abject dependence on the physical, conditions may be such that a man cannot express all that is within him, sometimes a man is tried beyond what he can endure.

All this is in Schweitzer. How poignant are his words when he talks to his countrymen that the terrible sufferings of the post-war period may crush the spiritual! This sense of the practical, aware that man is flesh and blood not only spirit and aspiration, this feeling for bread and clothes is strong in Schweitzer. His teaching of responsibility is attempt to lessen that social disparity, waste from one table would be a banquet set on another. Even where the social divide is less pronounced Schweitzer requires that every privilege carry with it a compulsion to sacrifice so that as far as humanly possible in matters social and in things spiritual, an equality be achieved.

* Goethe, p. 68.

“Renounce, renounce is still the word,” is the spirit of Goethe. Schweitzer writes, “The ethic demands from every one that they devote a portion of their life to their fellows. In what way and to what extent this is laid down for him the individual must gather from the thoughts which arise in him. . . . What he has to bring as an offering is the secret of each individual.” *

It has been earlier remarked that Goethe stood coldly aside from the great speculative systems of Kant, Fichte, Hegel. The theories of the cosmos conjured up by them are the work of genius and provoke our admiration, but the simple philosophy of life of Goethe and Schweitzer moves our heart and our feelings.

“The more I am acquainted with holy men, that are all for heaven and pretend not much to subtleties, the more I value and honour them. And when I have studied hard to understand some abstruse admired book I have but attained the knowledge of human imperfection, and to see that the author is but a man as well as I.” †

Those mighty systems of thought which endeavour to force the universe into a strait-jacket did not appeal to Goethe. Not thus is nature subdued. Those theologians who would unveil God Eternal and declare to the congregation His purposes, did not stir any response in Goethe, who wrote :

Him who dare name?
And who proclaim,
Him I believe?
The All-embracer,
All sustainer,
Holds and sustains he not
Thee, me, himself?
Then call it, what thou wilt—
Call it bliss! Heart! Love! God!
I have no name for it!
'Tis feeling all; ‡

* *C. & E.*, p. 261.

† *R. Baxter.*

‡ *Faust*, 3090.

Schweitzer writes: "God cannot be known, but must be grasped by the faith which says, 'nevertheless I am continually with Thee.' . . . There is no absolute: there is only the infinite in continuing manifestations. Only through such temporal manifestations as I communicate with, have I any intercourse with the infinite."*

He is one with Goethe in his reluctance to force nature into a creed, make her subservient to a creator God. There is no attempt to explain all as coming out of God, to whom it must return, no elaborate theory of a fall or an absorption, just a simple acceptance of nature as a child accepts its mother. Goethe phrased it:

To me are mountain masses grandly dumb;
I question neither whence nor why they come.

Schweitzer is assuredly one with Goethe in the poet's conviction that in communion with nature is our salvation. The Faustian drama contains, as its chief symbol of sin, estrangement from nature. To keep in touch with nature is essential to man's higher life. A natural similitude in Schweitzer is when he writes that the present, like Faust, has lost contact with things spiritual because a horrible separateness from nature has come about. Only if we return will healing and rest be found.

Schweitzer never writes of prayer, always of work. "Do the duty that lies nearest to thee, the next will have made itself plain."† As Carlyle advises, as in the Apocrypha, as in the last part of *Wilhelm Meister*, he believes, "the handywork of their craft is their prayer."‡ His life philosophy, if you can capture the rainbow in a net, might be summarized: a quiet acceptance of the facts of nature, a deepening of communion, then a rendering of devoted service. God, prayer, sacrifice, these three, and the gateway to these is sacrifice.

* *C. & E.*, p. 242. † *Sartor Resartus*, Book 2, ch. 10.

‡ *Ecclesiasticus* 38. 34.

This social sense in Schweitzer concerns itself much with justice. He finds in the last incident in *Faust*, the burning of the hut, a gross injustice against innocent helpless people, a symbol of what is happening a thousandfold today, due to the cruel practices of governments. How to restore feeling and sensibility to modern people is his concern; mere protest is of little service, only if people can be made to feel these terrible things will the practice of them cease. Too many people have a good conscience given them by the devil.

His peculiar oneness with Goethe is also in his recognition that feeling and thought must go hand in hand. You cannot take men to heaven by lecturing on The Way, nor is feeling a sure and abiding guide. Cold reason and fevered emotion must both be avoided. But if an emotional experience, reverence for life, is rationalized, then feeling and thought, are come together in a happy manner. In politics and religion, feeling now has the reins. Nationalism in politics and guidance in religion are feeling that has run riot. This tendency must be disciplined by thought: people must learn to think. Schweitzer presents his ethic as a reasoned appeal to thoughtful people. His life and his thought is a most happy marriage of Francis of Assisi and Thomas Aquinas.

The Acorn of his Oak

Indebted as he may be to Goethe, much as he owes to Kant, though Bach is his joy, it is with Paul that his spirit is one. "In labours, in distresses, in weariness . . ." He is also one with Paul seeking to save civilization in terms of the thought of his age. Paul, the thinker, grappling with the issues of the law and the second coming, was wrestling with the challenge of his time: the world, as it eventuated, was not saved by his modes of thought, yet no man more contributed to the lifting of men, women and children than Paul.

In The Gospels, however, are to be found final reasons for Schweitzer's conduct of life. That Jesus renounced his popularity, determined by a higher, a messianic call, is the inspiration behind The Threefold Sacrifice. The parable of Dives and Lazarus quickened his conscience. Study of the Jesus of history in his two books reveals that Galilee so possessed the student he became the beloved disciple of the twentieth century.

Few today bring together Monday and Sunday as does Schweitzer. He leads many, by example more than by words, to say thank-you for the privileges they have. In course of making their little sacrifice they share with Jesus his great hour, for Calvary is not only a green hill outside a city wall, it is the place where every happy person does something to help another less happy. Religion, on its active side, like mother on a Monday morning, is goodness with its sleeves rolled up.

If this is the practical he leads mystical religion to see the love of God flow swift and warm through the strange sad happenings of our day, as flows the Gulf Stream through the cold Atlantic. In course of meditating together we share with Jesus his transfiguration, for the place apart is not only a high mountain, it is church, university, or room wherein men think on things eternal. Religion, as a sacred hour, like mother on a Sunday night, is goodness teaching others to pray. Then the children are left to darkness, to stillness, to sleep.

Finally, write of him what one can, Schweitzer remains a mystery. Whatever tomorrow will say we cannot know, but if the phases of history are the life-span of creative ideas, "if religion is the lengthened shadow of one good man," we may hope that tomorrow will be fair, if we strive as he has striven.

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